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COMMENTARY

ON

THE PSALMS,

BY

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DOCTOR AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN BERLIN.

VOLUME I.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

FIRST VOLUME.

THE Author formed the sincere purpose of writing a Commentary upon the Psalms a number of years ago, when his eye was first opened to perceive the depth of their meaning. In 1830 he was going to apply himself to the execution of his purpose, but then, and as often since as the determination has again revived in him, other labours have pre-occupied his attention. After the completion of the first part of his elucidation of the most important and difficult places in the Pentateuch, his inclination toward this work awoke in such force that he could no longer resist it. The continuation of the work just referred to, which has been already begun, could the more easily be postponed to another time, as the first part has been published, at the same time, as a separate work.

What the Author has sought to accomplish here, and what he actually has accomplished, the indulgent reader may gather from this specimen of the work itself. With all its imperfections, he hopes it may be regarded as a work of that kind which has been long earnestly desired, and much needed.

The whole will consist of three volumes. That the

length to which the treatment of this first part has extended (comprising the first twenty-one Psalms), is not disproportionate to the compass thus assigned for the whole, may be understood by a comparative glance into the works of my predecessors, for example, into Rosenmüller's first volume, which contains only the first twenty Psalms. In the Psalms, much more than in any other book of Scripture, fulness at the commencement, and brevity afterwards, is required by the very nature of the thing.

The third volume will contain, besides the completion of the Commentary, a series of Treatises on the Psalms, which shall enter into the consideration, not only of the topics usually handled in the Introduction, but also of the doctrines as to faith and morality embodied in the Psalms.

The Author foresees that the spiritual element which pervades the Commentary will give rise to many objections. Without hoping to be able wholly to remove these objections, he would yet remark that these spiritual observations are not foreign to his proper aim, but are made for the sake of the exposition itself. The Psalms are expressions of holy feeling, which can only be understood by those who have become alive to such feeling. So that to bring out this is quite properly the purpose of the expositor. For those, in particular, who think the extracts from Luther's Commentary, which are so admirably adapted to that purpose, too numerous, they may comfort themselves with the thought that these will almost be confined to the present volume, as Luther's great work only reached to the first two-and-twenty Psalms.

However this work may be received, the Author has found an ample recompense in itself, and hopes that he

shall be able to look back upon it with pleasure, even in eternity. This renders him only the more anxious that it may be also blessed to others, especially to those who are now wandering in the wilderness where no water is, to bring back here and there one of them to the green pastures and fresh waters of the Divine word.

BERLIN, 28th October 1842.

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM FIRST.

THE Psalmist begins by extolling the blessedness of the righteous, who is first described negatively, as turning away from the counsels of the wicked, ver. 1, and then positively, as having his thoughts engrossed with the Divine law, ver. 2. He proceeds next to delineate under a beautiful image the prosperity which attends him in all his ways, and places in opposition to this the destruction which is the inseparable companion of wickedness, ver. 3, 4. He grounds upon these external principles the confidence, that God will take out of the way whatever, in the course of events, appears to conflict with them, that by his judgment he will overthrow the wicked, through whose malice the righteous suffer, and free his church, which should be formed only of the righteous, from their intermixture; for, as it was declared, in ver. 3 and 4, that the Lord interests himself in the righteous, and hence could not leave them helpless, while destruction is the fate of the wicked, the former must in consequence be exalted above the latter, ver. 5, 6.

According to this order, which alone secures to the "therefore," at the beginning of ver. 5, and the "for" in ver. 6, their proper meaning, the Psalm falls into three strophes, each consisting of two verses.

The Psalm is primarily of an admonitory character. What it says of the prosperity which attends the righteous, and the perdition which attends the wicked, cannot but incite to imitate the one, and shun the other. In reference to this Luther remarks: "It is the practice of all men to inquire after blessedness, and there is no man on earth who does not wish that it might go

well with him, and would not feel sorrow if it went ill with him. But he, who speaks in this Psalm with a voice from heaven, beats down and condemns every thing which the thoughts of men might cogitate and devise in the matter, and brings forth the only true description of blessedness, of which the whole world knows nothing, declaring that he only is blessed and prosperous whose love and desire are directed to the law of the Lord. This is a short description, and, indeed, one that goes against all sense and reason, especially against the reason of the worldly-wise and the high-minded. As if he had said: Why are ye so much in seeking counsel? why are ye ever in vain devising unprofitable things? There is just one precious pearl, and he has found it, whose love and desire is toward the law of the Lord, and who separates himself from the ungodly,—all succeeds well with him. But whosoever does not find this pearl, though he should seek with ever so much pains and labour the way to blessedness, he shall never find it."

The Psalm has, besides, a consolatory character, which comes clearly out in the last strophe; for it must tend to enliven the hope of the righteous upon the grace of God, and fill them with confidence, that every thing which now appears contrary to their hope, shall come to an end; that the judgment of God shall remove the offences, which were caused by the temporal prosperity of the wicked, and the troubles they thence experienced.

The truth contained in this Psalm is equally applicable to the church of the New Testament as to that of the Old. It remains perpetually true, that sin is the destruction of any people, and that salvation is the inseparable attendant of righteousness. Whatever, in the course of things, seems to run counter to this, will be obviated by the remark, that a righteous man, as the author delineates him—one whose desire is undividedly fixed upon the law of God, and to whom it is "his thought by day and his dream by night,"—is not to be found among the children of men. Just because the blessedness of salvation is inseparably joined to righteousness, no one can look for an absolute fulfilment of the promise of the Psalm. For even when the innermost bent of the mind is stedfastly set upon righteousness, there are found so many weaknesses and sins, that sufferings of various kinds are necessary, not less as deserved punishments, than as the means of improvement. These do not subvert the principles here established, but serve rather to confirm them.

The sentiment, that "every thing he does, prospers," which is literally true of the righteous, in so far as he is such, changes itself, in consequence of the imperfect nature of our righteousness, which alone can be charged with our loss of the reward that is promised to the perfect, into the still richly consolatory truth, that "all things work together for good to them who love God." Those who, blinded by Pelagianism, know not the true conditions of human righteousness, and who, consequently, want the only key to the mystery of the cross, apprehend the truth of the reigning idea in the Psalm, could they only at the same time escape from surrendering themselves to a crude dualism. It is unquestionable, say they, that the internal blessedness of life has no other ground than genuine piety, but as for outward things, "which depend upon natural influences, the relations and accidents of life, and the violent commotions of the populace," one can make no lofty pretensions to them. Who can but feel that natural influences and such like things are here placed in complete independence beside God, are virtually raised to the condition of a second God, and that we are at once translated from the Christian into the heathen territory, on which matter, accident, fate, Typhon, Achriman, play a distinguished part, and all on the same ground—the want of that recognition of sin, which peculiarly belongs to the territory of revelation? Such masters must not take it upon them to instruct the Psalmist, but must learn of him. Whoever really believes in one true God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world, he cannot but accord with the doctrine of the Psalmist. It is impossible to contract to the utmost the doctrine of recompense, without trenching closely upon the truth of one God. *Internal* good, as the perfect, is usually placed over against *external*, as the imperfect. But where, in reality, is the man, who enjoys a complete inward blessedness—who, even though labouring under the greatest delusion regarding his state, can spend so much as one day in perfect satisfaction with himself? Besides, is it not natural, that the external should go hand in hand with the internal? And have we any reason, on account of the troubles which befall us, to doubt the omnipotence and righteousness of God, and the truth of that doctrine of Scripture, which pervades both economics, and appears in every book from Genesis to Revelation, that God will recompense to every one according to his works? Instead of running into such mournful aberrations, it

behoves every one, when he reads what the Psalmist says of the righteous—"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper"—and finds that his own condition presents a melancholy contrast to what is here described, to turn back his eye upon the first and second verses, and inquire whether that also corresponds with his case, which is there affirmed of the righteous; and if he finds it to be otherwise, then should he smite upon his breast, and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and thereafter strive with all earnestness to realize the pattern there delineated, by employing the means which God has appointed for the purpose.

The subject of the Psalm is, in accordance with the previous remarks, quite general, and it is an error in many expositors to refer it to particular times and persons. There is great probability in the opinion of those, who suppose with Calvin, that this Psalm, found somewhere else, was placed by him who collected the Psalms, as an introduction to the whole. Basilius calls it a "short preface" to the Psalms; and that this view is of great antiquity, may be gathered from Acts xiii. 33, where Paul, according to the correct text, as is agreed by the most approved critics, (Erasmus, Mill, Bengel, Griesbach, &c.) quotes as the first Psalm that which, in our collection, occupies the second place. If the first was considered only as a sort of preface, the numbering would consequently take its commencement at the one following, as, indeed, is the case in some manuscripts. The matter of the Psalm is admirably suited to this application of it. "The collector of these songs," says Amyrald, "seems to have carefully placed before the eye of his readers at the very threshold, to what aim the actions of men should, as so many arrows, be directed." The position of the Psalm at the beginning appears peculiarly suitable, if, along with its admonitory tendency, the consolatory is also brought prominently out. In the latter respect, it may be regarded as in fact a short compend of the main subject of the Psalms. That God has appointed salvation to the righteous, perdition to the wicked—this is the great truth, with which the sacred bards grapple amid all painful experiences of life, which apparently indicate the reverse. The supposition is also favoured, or rather seems to be demanded, by the circumstance, that the Psalm has no superscription. As from Psalm third, a long series of titles follows, ascribing the Psalms to Da-

vid, it cannot be doubted that the collector intended to open the collection with these. So that there must have been a particular reason for making our Psalm an exception from the general rule, and it is scarcely possible to imagine any other than the one already mentioned.

It is justly remarked, however, by Koester, that the supposition in question by no means requires us to hold that the Psalm is a late production, and probably composed by the collector himself. The simplicity and freshness which characterize it are against this. That it must have been composed, at any rate, before Jeremiah, is evident from his imitation of it. A more determinate conclusion regarding the time of its composition, can only, since the Psalm itself furnishes no data, be derived from ascertaining its relation to Psalm second.

It has often been maintained, that the two Psalms form but one whole,[1] and this opinion has exercised considerable influence upon many manuscripts, (De Rossi mentions seven, and even Origen in his Hexapla by Montfaucon, p. 475, speaks of having seen one in his day.) But this view is obviously untenable. Each of the Psalms forms a separate and complete whole by itself. Still several appearances present themselves, which certainly point to a close relation between the two. First of all, there is the remarkable circumstance, that Psalm second stands in this place, at the head of a collection, to which such Psalms only belonged as bore the name of David on their superscription. We can hardly refer this to any other consideration than its inseparable connection with the first Psalm, which required it to follow this after its being placed, for the reason above given, at the commencement. Then there appears a certain outward resemblance between them: the number of verses in Psalm second is precisely the double of those in the first—and in both Psalms there is found a marked and singularly regular construction of strophes, the first Psalm falling into three strophes of two verses, and the second into four strophes of three. In regard to the subject, the first is admirably suited as an introduction to the second, for which it lays a general foundation. What is said in the first Psalm, generally of the different state and destiny of the righteous and the wicked, the second repeats with a special application to the Messiah and his adversaries. The first Psalm

[1] See the opinions of the Jews and the Fathers in Wetstein, on Acts xiii., 33.

had closed by announcing the judgment to the wicked, and at that point the second begins. On the other hand, the latter Psalm concludes with a benediction, as the former had commenced with it—compare "blessed is the man," with "blessed are all they that put their trust in him." The expression in Psalm ii. 12, "ye perish in the way," remarkably coincides with that in Psalm i. 6, "the way of the ungodly shall perish." Finally, the sentiment about "the nations imagining (literally, meditating) a vain thing," in Psalm second, acquires additional force, if viewed as a contrast to the meditation of the righteous on the law of the Lord, mentioned in the first Psalm.

These circumstances are by no means satisfactorily explained and accounted for, on the supposition that the collector had joined the second Psalm to the first, from certain points of connection happening to exist between them; and nothing remains for us but the conclusion, that both Psalms were composed by the same author, and were meant by him as different parts of one whole. This conclusion may be the more readily embraced, as we have elsewhere undoubted specimens of such pairs of Psalms, (as Psalm ix. and x., xiv. and xv., xlii. and xliii.) and as similar things are not awanting in Christian poets, for example, Richter's two poems, "it is not difficult to be a Christian," and "it costs much to be a Christian."

Now, as there are important grounds in Psalm second for ascribing it to David, we would hence be entitled to regard him as the author also of the first, and there are certainly no considerations of an opposite kind to weaken the conclusion. In its noble simplicity, its quiet but still extremely spirited character, it presents a close resemblance to other Psalms of which David was unquestionably the penman, and in particular to the xv. xxiii. viii. Psalms.

Ver. 1. *Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.* That the righteous should first be described negatively, has its ground in the proneness of human nature to what is evil. From the same ground arises the predominantly negative form of the decalogue. As there the thought of something, to which our corrupt heart is inclined, is everywhere forced on our notice, so also is it here. עֵצָה never signifies, what Stier and Hitzig here understand by it, *manner of thinking, sentiment,* but always *counsel,* as in Job xxi. 16, xxii. 18. The counsel of

any one, is sometimes the counsel which one gives, but for the most part it is the counsel which one takes himself, his plans and resolutions. This latter signification prevails everywhere in the expression, of walking in any one's counsel, which uniformly means, to follow his advice, to enter with him into the same designs—comp. 2 Chron. xxii. 5, where "walked after their counsel," corresponds to, "he walked in the ways of the house of Ahab," ver. 3, and "he did evil in the sight of the Lord like the house of Ahab," ver. 4, only with this distinction indicated by the "also" in ver. 5, and the clause following, "and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab to war," that while there the discourse is of a general agreement in thought and action, here it is carried out to particular plans and undertakings. In Micah vi. 16, to "walk in one's counsels," is taken as parallel with "observing one's statutes and doing one's works." In Psalm lxxxi. 12, "they walked in their own counsels," means, they walked in the counsels they themselves took, in the plans they themselves devised. Consequently, the exposition of Gesenius and others, who render the first clause of our Psalm: "who lives not according to the counsels of the ungodly," must be abandoned, and this the rather, that in what follows, the discourse is not of a dependence upon the influence of the wicked, but of one's personally belonging to them. To walk in the counsel of the wicked, is to move in the territory of their purposes, their worthless projects.

Olshausen in his emendations on the Old Testament, would read עדת for עצת, in the company or band of the ungodly. He rests upon the strong parallelism, which the author of this Psalm employs, and, indeed, pre-eminently in this first verse. The parallels here fall into three members: who walks not, stands not, sits not. In each member there is a preterite, as predicate, with the preposition ב following it, and a noun as its complement, with an appropriate genitive constantly depending on it. Two of the nouns which serve to limit the preposition, *way* and *seat*, may be local designations, as then they would most fitly agree to the sense of the particular verbs. In the first noun alone, no such local designation is to be found. The proposed change is certainly needed to make out this signification. For the *counsel* undoubtedly refers to the spiritual error, the spiritually wrong path, into which he wanders, who follows it. But the second term, *the way of sinners*, must also be spiritually understood. To speak of standing in their way can only

refer to their manner of acting,—to follow with them the same moral paths, or to act like them. "The seat" is the only term that implies an external locality. And the difference is of little moment, since even here the outward companionship comes into view, only as the issue of an internal agreement. If we examine the matter more closely, it will be found that the alteration proposed is not only quite unnecessary, but also unsuitable. For עדת is excluded on the very ground which Olshausen presses against עצת. According to the analogy of the other members of the verse, the preposition ב must admit of being rendered by *on;* it must mark the territory on which the walk is maintained. Now, this perfectly accords with *counsel,* but would be quite senseless as applied to *company.*

According to the common acceptation, מושב must mean here, not "seat," but "session." Of the few passages, however, which are brought forward in support of this meaning, Psalm cvii. 32, so far from requiring, does not even admit of it. If the translation adopted is: "in the session (assembly) of the elders they shall praise him," we must then feel ourselves shut up to the perfectly groundless supposition, that the elders have separate meetings appointed them for the praise of God, apart from the rest of the people. History knows of nothing but *general* religious assemblies. Let it be rendered: upon the seat, or the bench of the elders, and then every thing will be in order; "they shall extol him in the congregation of the people, and praise him on the bench of the elders," first the whole, then the most distinguished part. The only meaning which is certain, is here also quite suitable. To sit in the seat of the scorners, is, in other words, to sit as scorners, just as in the preceding clauses, the discourse was of such as stood, not beside sinners, but among them, and not simply followed the counsels of ungodly men, but themselves hatched these. Luther has given the meaning correctly: "nor sits where the scorners sit." It is, perhaps, not an accidental thing, that the attitude of sitting is distinctively ascribed to the scorners. The mocking disposition unfolds itself chiefly in a company of those who are like-minded, inflamed with wine and intoxicating drink, which we elsewhere find mentioned in connection with mockers,—as in Isa. v. and Prov. xx. 1, where wine itself is called a mocker. So, in reference to the social meeting, the act of sitting is frequently alluded to; for example, in Jer. xv. 17, "I sat not in

the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced;" in Psalm i. 20, "thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, thou slanderest thine own mother's son;" Psalm lxix. 12, "they that sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards." It is proper to add, however, that in Psalm xxvi. 4, 5, sitting is attributed to men of deceit, and evil doers.

לֵץ (scorner,) marks one who scoffs at God, his law, and ordinances, his judgment and his people. In Prov. ix. 7, 8, the scorner is placed in opposition to the wise, whose heart is filled with holy reverence toward God and divine things. In opposition to De Wette, who would here exclude the strictly religious scoffers, we can point to such passages as Isa. v. 19, "they say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it;" Jer. xvii. 15, "Behold, they say unto me, where is the word of the Lord? Let it come now,"— where the words of such scoffers are expressly given. Religious mockery is as old as the fall. The admonition in 2 Peter iii. 3, regarding scoffers, as appears to me, has some respect to the passage before us. The form is contracted from לֵיצ, comp. Ew. p. 405.

Many have sought to discover a gradation in the verse. But there is no foundation for this, either in the nouns or in the verbs. In reference to the former, it was already remarked by Venema, that "they distinguish men as exhibiting different appearances, rather than different grades of sin." The רשע, ungodly, or rather wicked, in Arabic, denotes one of great lust, and concupiscence, and in Syriac, disturbed in mind: hence it properly signifies the passionate, restless, (Isa. lvii. 20, "the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest;") it is descriptive of the wicked, in respect to their internal state, their violent commotions within, the disquietude, springing from sinful desires, which constantly impels them to fresh misdeeds. The חטאים, sinners, designates the same persons in respect to the lengthened series of sinful acts which proceed from them. Finally the לצים, scornful, brings into view a peculiarly venomous operation and fruit of evil. But in the verbs we can the less conceive of a gradation being intended, that the middle verb עמד, according to Stier, signifies not to stand, but to continue, to persevere, and thus manifestly destroys the supposed combination of the three bodily states of waking men. The verse sim-

ply declares in the most expressive manner possible, the absence of all fellowship with sin.

Ver. 2. The fellowship with unrighteousness, which the godly man zealously shuns, is here placed in opposition to God and his law, which he zealously seeks. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. The law* never has the general signification often ascribed to it here by expositors—*doctrine;* but always the more special sense of *precept.* That this is the import here, is perfectly obvious from a comparison of the parallel passages, which show also, that the law meant here, is that described, according to Psalm xl. 8, in the volume of the book or roll, called the law of Moses, which is always to be understood wherever the law is spoken of in the Psalms. These parallel passages are, Deut. vi. 6, 7, where Moses says to the people: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them," &c.; Joshua i. 8, where the angel says to him: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous." This last text manifestly stands in a very near relation to ours, not merely from the meditation spoken of, but also from the prosperity connected with it. Just as what the angel speaks to Joshua, rests on the ground of that passage in Deuteronomy, and points to it, (comp. also Deut. xvii. 19, which contains a like word of exhortation to the future king of Israel;) so the author of our Psalm points to the exhortation addressed to Joshua, who stood forth there as a worthy type of the fulfilment of what is here required, and in whose experience, the reward here promised, found a sure guarantee for its realization. How De Wette could think, that the love and study of the law being enjoined, is a proof of the later production of the Psalm, can scarcely be imagined, since a profound investigation into the nature of the law, the converting of it into juice and blood, might be proved by many passages to have been even held by believers of the Old Testament, to be the highest end of their life. How much David fulfilled this condition, how intimate a knowledge he had of the law even in its smallest particulars, and how constantly it formed the centre of his thoughts and feelings, the delight of his heart, will be placed beyond all doubt by this ex-

position. Indeed, the fifteenth Psalm, which the dullest critic must ascribe to David, may serve, notwithstanding its limited compass, for ample proof; for it carries a close and continued verbal reference to the Pentateuch. Compare also Psalm xix. Besides, what is here meant, is not a kind of speculating and laborious trifling upon the law, quite foreign to the practical turn of the Old Testament saints, but a meditation bearing immediate reference to the walk and conduct. This appears, as is well remarked by Claus, from the whole context, which is throughout practical. The subject in ver. 1 treats of fellowship with sin; in ver. 3—6 of the different portions of the righteous and the wicked. How, in such a connection, could ver. 2 refer to the study of the law in a theoretical point of view, and not rather to the application of the heart toward the objects and contents of the Divine Word? To this result tends also a comparison of the parallel passages, in which the reading and meditating are expressly mentioned as means to the keeping and doing. Luther remarks on the words, "His delight is the law of the Lord:" "The prophet does not speak here of such an inclination, or a liking as the philosophers and modern theologians would applaud, but he speaks also of this, that it is a pure and enlightened satisfaction of heart, and a particular desire, which he, whom this Psalm pronounces blessed, has toward the law of God, not so much seeking what the law promises, or fearing what it threatens, as feeling that the law is holy, righteous, and good. Therefore, it is not merely a love for the law, but such a sweet attraction for and delight in it, as the world and its princes can neither prevent nor take away by prosperous or adverse circumstances, nay, which shines triumphantly forth through poverty, reproach, the cross, death, and hell; for such desire shows itself the most in necessities and distresses, in adversity and persecution. Now from all this it seems manifest, that this Psalm (in which case it may be understood of Christ alone,) is nothing else than a mirror and standard, toward which a truly pious and blessed man must strive and labour; for in this life there is no one, who is not conscious of some interruption to this delight in the law of the Lord, by reason of the lust and the law warring in the members, to which this law is decidedly and wholly opposed; as St Paul complains, Rom. vii. 22, 23, when he says: 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law

in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.'"

It is a great thing, therefore, to have one's delight in the law of the Lord. The natural man, even when his conscience is alive to the holiness of the law, and he anxiously strives to delight himself in it, can never get beyond the region of fear. The regenerate themselves, although they have a predominating delight in the law, yet do not constantly maintain the conflict with their sinful propensities. Perfect delight in the law pre-supposes perfect union of the human with the Divine will, perfect extirpation of sin—for so much sin, so much dislike to the law—perfect holiness. And since this is not to be found in the present life, who can complain that the saying, "every thing he does prospers," does not meet in him with a complete fulfilment? The only righteous one on earth, Christ, he alone could have laid claim to such a fulfilment; but he freely renounced it, he bore the cross, when he might well have rejoiced. Sufferings are necessary, were it only as a testimony to the condition of men as sinful, and since none experience uniform prosperity, we have in that a real indication from the hand of God, that even his saints have sin still dwelling in them.

On the "day and night," J. H. Michaelis remarks: "with such incessant study, that even when the act ceases, there is no abatement of the pious affection." Instead of *meditating*, Luther has *speaking*, (mentioning at the same time, that "the speaking here meant, is not the mere utterance of the lips, which hypocrites could also give, but such speaking as labours for expression to the feelings of the heart,") but the construction with ב, *in* (comp. however, Deut. vi. 7,) and especially the reference to the night, recommends the first signification. Such meditation day and night, is only to be found in him, who, according to the expression of Luther, "has, through desire, become one cake with the word of God; as then love makes of him who loves, and that which is loved, one thing."—The construction of the הגה with ב, implies, that the person who meditates, loses himself in his object.

Ver. 3. *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does he carries on prosperously.* The ו, *and*, is not to be translated *for*. For the verse expresses not the ground,

but the development of the blessedness. The meaning was perceived quite correctly by Luther: "After the prophet has described in ver. 1 and 2, the man who is blessed before God, and painted him in proper colours, he comes here to describe him still further, by means of a very beautiful image." עַל, *by*, properly *upon*. A thing is said to be upon one, if it projects over, or generally rises higher. Hence this preposition, which in common use is rendered *by*, *beside*, when the discourse is of a lower object, in juxtaposition with a higher, is very frequently employed in reference to streams, springs, and seas.—The comparison of a prosperous man to a tree planted beside a river, which is peculiarly appropriate in the arid regions of the East, occurs also in Jer. xvii. 8. There, however, it is only the imitation and further extension of our passage.[1] Nothing but the greatest confusion could invert the relation of these two passages to each other. The sentence in Jeremiah has evidently the appearance of a commentary or paraphrase. In Psalm xcii. 12, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree," the particular is put instead of the general. With the expression "in his season," compare that in Mark xi. 13, "for it was not the time of figs." Most of the older expositors understand what is said about bringing forth his fruit, of good works, but the connection shows, that fruitfulness here, is considered merely as a sign of joyful prosperity. The figure was embodied into an appropriate symbolical transaction by Christ, when he cursed the fig-tree. Because the Jewish people did not answer the conditions in ver. 1 and 2, they could no longer be as a tree yielding its fruit in its season; so there alights upon the tree, by which that was represented, the heavy word, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever," Matt. xxi. 19. In the words: "Whatsoever he does he carries on prosperously," the author returns from the image to the object, and regards that as the first thing. The word הַצְלִיחַ is to be taken here, not as many expositors do, in an intransitive sense, for then we should have expected לָ, but transitively, to *accomplish successfully;* so generally, and in particular, 2 Chron. vii. 11. The intransitive signification, when more closely considered, does not occur even in the *single* passsge which Winer has referred to as an example

[1] See Küper Jerem. libr. sacr. interp. p. 162.

of it, Judges xviii. 5. The hiphil everywhere retains its import. There appears to be an allusion to Gen. xxxix. 3, 4, where the same expression is used of Joseph, whose prosperous condition was a pledge of like prosperity to those who resemble him in disposition.

Ver. 4. *The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff, which the wind drives away.* Luther: "When Scripture speaks of the ungodly, take heed that thou thinkest not, as the ungodly ever do, as if it referred to Jews and heathens, or, perhaps also to other persons, but present thyself before this word, as what respects and concerns also thee. For a right-hearted and gracious man is jealous of himself, and trembles before every word of God." For the understanding of the figure, to which John the Baptist makes reference in Matt. iii. 12, as that of the tree had also been mentioned in ver. 10, (see too, Job xxi. 18,) it is to be remarked, that, in the East, the threshing-floors are placed upon heights. They throw aloft the corn that has been threshed, until the wind has driven the chaff away.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment.* The *therefore* occasions great difficulty to those who fail in perceiving aright the relation between ver. 5, 6, and 3, 4. Some, as Claus, have been led thereby to adopt instead, the sense of *because*, which the phrase, in the original, is alleged frequently to possess. That the ungodly stand not in the judgment, must constitute the ground why, according to ver. 4, they fly away as the chaff. But it has already been proved by Winer, what is indeed self-evident, that the עַל כֵּן never carries this meaning, which is precisely the reverse of the true one; that it always indicates the consequence, never the cause. Those who adopt the common signification, cannot properly explain how that should be here described as a consequence flowing from the statement in the preceding verse, which appears to be simply co-ordinate with it. Amyrald alone, of all expositors, seems to have got upon the right track, and thus paraphrases: "But although the providence of God, whose ways are sometimes unsearchable, does not always place so remarkable a distinction between those two kinds of men, still the future life (he erroneously understands by the judgment, only the final judgment,) shall so distinguish them, that no one shall any longer be able to doubt, who they are that follow the path of true prosperity." In ver. 3 and 4, the idea was expressed concerning the conditions

of the righteous and the wicked, which is applicable to all times. And from this truth, which can never be a powerless and quiescent one, is here derived its impending realization: so certain as salvation is to the righteous, and perdition to the wicked, the judgment must overthrow and depress the latter, and, at the same time, exalt the former to the enjoyment of the felicity destined for them. That the *therefore* refers, not simply to ver. 4, but also to ver. 3, is clear from ver. 6, where the subject of both verses is resumed, and is represented as the ground of what is said in ver. 5. When that straitened application of the *therefore* is adopted, one cannot well commence with the first clause of ver. 6, "for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," and must help out the sense by shoving in an *only* or *indeed*, through which the general nature of the conclusion, by a reference to both kinds of men, which the whole strain of the Psalm would have led us to expect, becomes quite lost. Ver. 5 is entirely occupied with a consequence from ver. 3 and 4, if we only consider that judgment against the wicked carries in its bosom the deliverance of the righteous who had suffered under their oppressions and annoyances. Indeed, ver. 6 requires us to view it in that light, as it can only then form a suitable conclusion.

The whole context shows, that by *the judgment* we are to understand God's; in particular, it appears from the following verse, where the fact that the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, is founded on the truth that the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. The reference to a human judgment, which has again been lately maintained by Hitzig, is altogether to be rejected. De Wette narrows the expression too much, when he would understand it only of the general outward visitations of judgment, which were peculiar to the theocracy. Ewald justly refers the words to the progression of the divine righteousness, which is perpetually advancing, though not every moment visible. All manifestations of punitive righteousness are comprehended in it. "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. xii. 14.

And sinners (shall not stand) *in the congregation of the righteous*, i. e. those who, by turning away their hearts from God, have internally separated themselves from the kingdom of God, shall also be outwardly expelled by a righteous act of judgment.

The external church or community, can only for a time be different from the company or congregation of the righteous. For God will take care that they shall be separated from the leaven of the ungodly, a separation which shall certainly find its proper accomplishment only at the close of this present world. That the divine community, in its true idea, is the community of the righteous, embodies a prophecy of the excision and final overthrow of sinners. An allusion is kept up through the whole verse to the expression so often used in the Pentateuch, regarding the transgressors of the Divine law, "That soul is cut off from his people," that is, it was *ipso facto* separated from the community of God: and the declaration is commonly followed by an announcement of the particular manner, in which the judgment mentioned as already virtually given, should be outwardly executed, or be executed by God. We understand, therefore, the community or congregation of the righteous as a designation of the whole covenant-people, in reference to which the Israelites are elsewhere (for example, Numb. xxiii. 10, Psalm cxi. 1,) called the *righteous* or *upright*, and also the holy, (comp. Num. xvi. 3.) That this idea shall one day be fully realized, is intimated by Isaiah in ch. ix. 9, liv. 13. The עֵדָה, *congregation*, stands for a description of the whole community of Israel, (see *Gesen. Thes.* on the word.) The whole people are referred to in the parallel passage, Ez. xiii. 9, "And my hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing (book) of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel." Accordingly "sinners in the congregation of the righteous," may be regarded as equivalent to "sinners in the congregation of Israel," that being the congregation of the righteous. An example in part, of the idea here announced, is to be found in the overthrow of the company of Korah, of whom it is said, Numb. xvi. 33, "They perished from among the congregation." Afterwards, also, in the fate of Saul and his party. The discipline of God in his church proceeds more vigorously, the more inactive men are in maintaining it. De Wette and others understand by the *righteous*, the *elite*, who visibly occupy the ground of fortunate citizens of the theocratic kingdom. But this is inadmissible, as their being said not to stand or to remain among the righteous, implies, that they had belonged to the community of the right-

teous up to the judgment, which was to throw them off, like morbid matter from the body in the crisis of a disease.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.* According to various expositors, the two members of the verse do not correspond exactly, and something must be supplied in each. God knows the way of the righteous, and therefore they cannot fail to be prosperous; he knows the way of the wicked, and therefore they cannot fail to perish. But this exposition is not to be approved. The figure of the way occurs in the Psalms under a two-fold signification; first of the conduct, and then of the portion, fate, or destiny. The latter signification is by much the most common; comp. Psalms xxxvii. 5, 18, 23; Isa. xl. 27. Now, according to the above exposition, the first signification must be taken; but the second clause shows that the other ought to be preferred. The *perishing* applies only to the circumstances of the wicked. They who would refer it to the moral walk, must torture the word with arbitrary meanings, or cloak the difficulty with circumlocutions. And where the parallelism is so marked, the *way* must carry the same sense in the first clause. For understanding it of the circumstances, the corresponding passage in Psalm ii. 12 may be regarded as a confirmation. Indeed, it would never have been viewed otherwise, if only the reference of this verse to verses 3 and 4 had been rightly perceived, in which the things befalling the righteous and the wicked are alone discoursed of: the righteous are prosperous, the wicked are unprosperous; *therefore* the wicked shall not stand, &c. As here it is spoken of the way of the wicked, that it perishes, so of his hope, in Job viii. 13; Prov. x. 28. The *knowing* here comprehends *blessing* in itself as its necessary consequence. If the way of the righteous, their lot, is known by God as the omniscient, it cannot but be blessed by him as the righteous. Hence there is no necessity, in order to preserve the parallelism, which is made good otherwise, to ascribe to *know* the sense of *having care and affection for, loving,* which it properly never possesses. It is enough if only God with his knowledge is not shut up in the heavens; the rest flows spontaneously from his nature, and needs not to be specially mentioned. How little the ידע in such connections loses, or even modifies its common signification, appears from the parallel passage, Psalm xxxi. 7, "Thou considerest my trouble, thou knowest my soul in adversities," where the *knowing* is

parallel with *considering* or *seeing*. It is justly remarked by Ewald, that the issue in ver. 5 and 6 is truly prophetical, perpetually in force, and consequently descriptive of what is to be for ever expected and hoped for in the whole world. Its limitation to the affairs of the peculiar theocratic government, is as certainly false as God's righteousness is inseparable from his nature, and the moral government of the world is, for that reason, unalterable. Luther: "At the close of this Psalm, I would admonish, as has also been done by such holy fathers as Athanasius and Augustine, that we must not simply read or sing the Psalms, as if they did not concern us; but we must read and sing them for this purpose, that we may be improved by them, may have our faith strengthened, and our hearts comforted amid all sort of necessities. For the Psalter is nothing else than a school and exercise for our heart and mind, to the end, that we may have our thoughts and inclinations turned into the same channel. So that he reads the Psalter without spirit, who reads it without understanding and faith.

PSALM II.

The Psalmist sees with wonder, ver. 1—3, many nations and their kings rise against Jehovah and his Anointed, their rightful king. He then describes the manner in which Jehovah carries himself toward this undertaking, who first laughs, then terrifies them with an indignant speech, and declares their attempt to be in vain, because they revolt against him, whom he himself has set up as his king. In ver. 7—9, the anointed proclaims, more at length, what the Lord had briefly thrown out against the insurgents, that the Lord had given him, as his Son, all the nations and kingdoms of the earth for a possession, and along with that, power and authority to punish those who rebelled against him. The Psalmist finally turns himself, ver. 10—12, to the kings, and admonishes them to yield a lowly submission to the anointed King and Son of God, who is equally ready to save those that trust in him, as to destroy those that rise up against him. In few Psalms does the strophe-arrangement appear so marked as in this. One perceives at a glance, that the whole falls into four strophes of three members each. The verses again, regularly consist of two members, only the last

verse has four, for the purpose of making a full-toned conclusion.

There are the clearest grounds for asserting, that by the King, the Anointed, or Son of God, no other can be understood than the Messias. It is generally admitted, that this exposition was the prevailing one among the older Jews, and that in later times they were led to abandon it only for polemical reasons against the Christians. This is supported, not only by the express declaration of Jarchi and a considerable number of passages in the writings of the older Jews, in which the Messianic sense appears uppermost, and which may be seen in Venema's Introduction to this Psalm, but also by the fact, that two names of the Messias, which were current in the time of Christ,—the name of Messias itself, the anointed,—and the name, Son of God, applied by Nathanael in his conversation with Christ, John i. 49, and also by the high-priest in Matth. xxvi. 63, owed their origin to this Psalm in its Messianic meaning. The former is applied to the coming Saviour only in another passage, Dan. ix. 25, the latter in this Psalm alone. But though this is certainly a remarkable fact, we could not regard it as, by itself, constituting a sufficient ground for the interpretation in question. Neither would we rest upon the circumstance, that the New Testament, in a series of passages, refers this Psalm to Christ, (it is so by all the Apostles in Acts iv. 25, 26, by Paul in Acts xiii. 33, as also in Hebrews i. 5, v. 5, while manifest allusions to the same Messianic sense occur in Rev. ii. 27, xii. 5, xix. 15). For Psalms typically referring to the Messiah are not unfrequently in the New Testament referred to Christ, and the Psalm really contains an indirect prophecy respecting him, even though it were primarily referred to some individual living under the Old Covenant, so that the two contending interpretations are not so far asunder from each other as at first view they might seem; and, consequently, we cannot build with perfect confidence upon those passages, though undoubtedly the fact, that the authors of the New Testament followed the direct Messianic sense, renders it very probable that this was the prevailing one among their contemporaries. The valid proof we find in the *internal grounds alone*, in regard to which we remark at the outset, that we can have no interest in deceiving ourselves about its meaning, since, according to our view, the Messianic kernel of the Psalm, and its importance for the present time would remain quite inviolable, though the in

ternal grounds should speak for its being primarily referred, for example, to David. Whatever assurance he could derive, as to the fruitlessness of the revolt made against him by the subjects of his kingdom, from his Divine appointment, and the nearness of his relation to God, that must be indicated in a far higher degree still when understood with reference to Christ's relation to his rebellious subjects. But the internal grounds speak so loudly and so decidedly for the Messianic sense, that we can only ascribe the disinclination manfested towards it to causes, the investigation of which is foreign to our present purpose.

Many traits present themselves in our Psalm which are applicable to no other person than Messiah. Superhuman dignity is attributed to the subject of the Psalm in ver. 12, where the revolters are admonished to submit themselves, in fear and humility, to their king, since his opponents shall be destroyed by his severe indignation, while those who put their trust in him shall be made blessed. The remark of Venema: "The anger of the king is set forth as an object of fear, ver. 12, in a manner not properly becoming the creature, and the placing of a confidence in him is there also recommended, which is most repugnant to the standing of a creature;" this remark is too well grounded to be capable of being rebutted, as the fruitlessness of all attempts to refer to the Lord what is there said of his Anointed, abundantly shows. Against every other person but Messiah speaks also ver. 12, where the king is distinctly called the Son of God, and ver. 6, 7, where the names "his king," and "his anointed," are given him in a sense which implies his title to the inheritance of the whole earth. Ver. 1—3, and ver. 8—10, are decisive against all earthly monarchs, for they declare the people and kings of the whole earth to be the possession of this king, and speak of them as striving in vain to break his yoke. The extent of his kingdom is here described to be what the Messiah's kingdom is always described in those passages which are generally admitted to refer to him,—comp. for example, Zech. ix. 10; Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1. De Wette endeavours to support himself here by an appeal to the pretended "liking of the Hebrew poets for hyperbole, and the disposition of the inspired members of the theocracy to conceive magnificent hopes." But in all circumstances, hyperbole has its limits, and the over-working here must have been connected, not with the representation of the present, but only with the promises of the future. 'Hoff-

man, in his work on Prophecy and its Fulfilment, p. 160, thinks that the words, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession," mean no more than that "whatever people, whatever distant lands he was to have for a possession, these Jehovah would bring under him." But, however high a destiny was appointed to David, he could only have besought for himself some small territories in the neighbourhood of Canaan. Besides, it is overlooked, that this Divine appointment and supremacy are held against the kings of the earth, who have revolted against the king, their rightful Lord; that, on the same ground, the judges of the earth, in ver. 10, are admonished to return to their allegiance to their proper king. And then, where shall we find in the history, even the smallest intimation that the Lord made such an offer to David, as if it had been at his option to say whether he would be ruler over the whole world? Not even the sovereignty of a single people was offered in that manner to David. He never had to wage a war of conquest, but always merely to defend himself against hostile attacks. It is farther to be regarded as conclusive against an earthly king, that the revolt here mentioned against the Son, and the Anointed of Jehovah, is represented as a revolt entirely against Jehovah himself, and the nations are exhorted to yield themselves to him with humility and reverence. It were a quite different thing if the discourse had been of enemies who aimed at the overthrow of the kingdom of God; the enemies, who stand forth here, have no other end in view than to free themselves from the yoke of the king. Although we would not absolutely maintain the impossibility of such a mode of representation, there is still awanting any parallel passage, according to which any such design as revolt expressly against Jehovah had been meditated. The validity of this ground, which was already advanced in the first part of my Christology, is admitted by Hitzig. He denies still more decidedly than we would be disposed to do, that heathen nations, which had been subdued by the people of God, without being farther viewed as Jehovah's subjects, could be regarded as revolting against Jehovah whenever they made an attempt to regain their freedom. To serve a deity, says he, is either to profess a religion, or at least includes this, and presupposes it,—the Moabites served David, 2 Sam. viii. 2, not God. On this account, though he will still not declare himself for the Messianic

interpretation, which reconciles all difficulties, he has felt himself obliged to throw back the composition of the Psalm to the time of the Maccabees, when the attempt was first made of incorporating vanquished heathens, by subjecting them to the rite of circumcision,—a supposition in which he will certainly have no followers. Finally, the Messianic sense is supported by the same grounds which prove that of Ps. xlv. lxxii. cx. which so remarkably harmonize with ours, that their connection with the Messiah must stand or fall together. These grounds are so convincing that we find here among the defenders of the Messianic interpretation many even of those whose theological sentiments must have disposed them rather to adopt a different view, in particular, Eichhorn, Bertholdt, Rosenmüller, Koester; also Sack, in his *Apologt.*, and Umbreit in his *Erbauung a. d. Psalter*, p. 141, have advocated the same opinion.

Though the Psalm has no superscription, yet that David was its author, as indeed he is expressly named in Acts iv. 25, may be gathered from the undoubted fact, that the relations of David's time, form the evident ground of the representation which is given,—comp. the closing remarks, as also the resemblance to Psalm cx. The general character of Psalm first, suitable for an introduction, would scarcely have warranted the compiler to place it, and this, so closely related to it, at the head of a long series of Davidic Psalms, unless he had felt convinced of David's being their author. In common with the first, this Psalm is easy and simple in style; and that the discourse is of a more spirited character, arises from the different nature of the subject.

Ver. 1. *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* The *why* is an expression of astonishment and horror at the equally foolish and impious attempt of the revolters. The הגה is here taken by some in the sense of *being in commotion, blustering;* but in that sense the word does not elsewhere occur in the Hebrew; and as little does it occur in that of Koester, to *murmur.* The common meaning is here quite suitable. ריק, not an adverb, *in vain, to no purpose,* but a noun, *vanity, nothing.* The vanity or nothing is that which, from being opposed to the Divine counsel, and therefore nothing, also leads to nothing, reaches not its aim, the revolt against the king, which, at the same time, is revolt against the almighty God. The *why* at the beginning, and the *vain thing* at the end of this verse, are what alone indicate, in the other-

wise purely historical representation of ver. 1—3, the point of view in which the transaction is to be considered. But these two little words contain the germ of the whole subject from ver. 4 to ver. 12, in which it is unfolded why the project of the insurgents is a groundless and vain one.

Ver. 2. *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers sit with one another against the Lord and his anointed.* It is unnecessary, and destructive to the sense, to repeat, with De Wette, Koester, and others, the *wherefore* at the beginning of this verse. There is no hostility expressed in the first verb here, merely by itself; that is indicated only through the connection and the addition of the words "against the Lord." *The kings of the earth*,—the huge mass of tumultuous revolters draws upon itself so much the eye of the prophet, that he overlooks the small company of subjects who still remained faithful. The יסד means to *found*, in Niph. *to be founded*, Isa. xliv. 28, Ex. ix. 18; then poetically, to *sit down*. This is the only legitimate exposition of the word here. The idea of combination and common counsel, is not given by the verb itself, but only by the adverb *together*, with which it is united, as it is also in Psalm xxxi. 13. *Against the Lord and his anointed.* Calvin remarks, that this is not necessarily to be understood as implying, that the revolt wore the aspect of being avowedly against God; indeed, they could not revolt against him otherwise than mediately, when they sought to withdraw themselves from the supremacy of his Son; and in that respect, to use Luther's expression, the ungodly often make terrible efforts for God's honour against God's honour. The *anointing* in the Old Testament, whether it be viewed as an actually performed symbolical action, or as a mere figure, constantly marks the communication of the gift of the Holy Spirit,—see Christol. P. II. p. 445. This meaning evidently shines forth in the account that is given of Saul's anointing, 1 Sam. x. 1, and David's, xvi. 13, 14. The kings of Israel were said pre-eminently to be *anointed*, because they received a peculiarly rich measure of Divine grace for their important office. From them was the expression transferred, unconditionally, to THE KING, the one in whom the idea of the kingdom was to be perfectly realized. His endowment with the Spirit, without measure, which was given only in measure to his types, was noticed by Isaiah, chap. xi., as an essential feature. Luther remarks with suitable application to the members, of what is here said con-

cerning the head: "Therefore God permits the ungodly to boil and rage against the righteous, and employ against them all their devices. But all such attempts are like the swelling waves of the sea, blown up by the wind, which make as if they would beat down the shore, but before they even reach it, again subside, and melt away in themselves, or spend themselves with harmless noise upon the beach. For the righteous is so firmly grounded in his faith upon Christ, that he confidently scorns, like a beach, such vain impotent threatenings of the wicked, and such proud swellings, which are destined so soon again to disappear."

Ver. 3. The enemies are introduced speaking; *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* The plural suffix has reference to Jehovah and his Anointed. *Their bands,*—that is, the bands which they have laid upon us. The prophet speaks as from the soul of the insurgents, to whom the mild yoke of the Lord and his Anointed appears as a galling chain. Calvin: "So even now we see that all the enemies of Christ find it as irksome a thing to be compelled to submit themselves to his supremacy, as if the greatest disgrace had befallen them."

Ver. 4. The prophet looks away from the wild turmoil of enemies, from the dangers which here below seem to threaten the kingdom of the Anointed, to the world above, and sets over against them the almightiness of God. Calvin: "However high they may lift themselves, they can never reach to the heavens, nay, while they seek to confound heaven and earth, they do but dance like grasshoppers. The Lord meanwhile looks calmly forth from his high abode, upon their senseless movements." *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.* God is here emphatically described as being enthroned in heaven, to mark his exalted sovereignty over the whole machinery of earth, and, in particular, over the kings of the earth. The laughter and derision are expressive of security and contempt. Calvin: "We must therefore hold, that if God does not immediately punish the wicked, it is his time to laugh, and though we must sometimes even weep, yet this thought should allay the sharpness of our grief, nay, wipe away our tears, that God does not represent himself as if he was tardy or weak, but seeks, through silent contempt, for a time, to break the petulance of his enemies." Expositors generally suppose that the

לָמוֹ is to be limited by the יִשְׂחָק (the *them* by the *laughing*). This is not necessary, though it is certainly supported by Psalm xxxvii. 13, lix. 8. Luther gives a course of admirable remarks upon this passage; but for the sake of our exposition itself, we must omit a considerable part of them, which have for their object a more general practical design. "All this is written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, may have hope. For what is here written of Christ, is an example for all Christians. For every one who is a sound Christian, especially if he teaches the word of Christ, must suffer his Herod, his Pilate, his Jews and heathens, who rage against him, to speak much in vain, to lift themselves up and take counsel against him. If this is not done now by men, by the devil, or, finally, by his own conscience, it will at least be done on his death-bed. There, at last, it will be in the highest degree necessary to have such words of consolation in remembrance—he who sits in heaven laughs, the Lord holds them in derision. To such a hope we must cling fast, and on no account suffer ourselves to be driven from it. As if he would say—So certain is it, that they speak in vain, and project foolish things, when they would appear before men as strong and mighty, treating God as of little esteem, and challenging him to oppose them, as he would needs do in a matter of great and serious moment; that he only laughs and mocks at them, as if it were a small and despicable thing which was not worth minding. O how great a strength of faith is required for these words! For who believed, when Christ suffered, and the Jews triumphed over and oppressed him, that God all the time was laughing? So that when we suffer and are oppressed by men, though we do believe that God holds our adversaries in derision, yet we may be regarded by others, and may ourselves feel precisely as if we were mocked and overcome both by God and men." Upon the expression, "he that sitteth in the heavens," Luther specially remarks—"As if it were said, he who cares for us dwells quite secure, apart from all fear, and if we are involved in trouble and contention, he fixes his regard upon us; we move and fluctuate here and there, but he stands fast, and will order it so, that the righteous shall not contine for ever in trouble, Psalm lv. 22. But all this proceeds so secretly that thou canst not well perceive it, thou shouldst then need to be in heaven thyself. Thou must suffer by land and sea, and among all creatures; thou must hope for no consolation in thy sufferings and

troubles, till thou canst rise through faith and hope above all, and longest for him who dwells in the heavens—then thou also dwellest in the heavens, but only in faith and hope. Therefore must we fix and stay our hearts in all our straits, assaults, tribulations, and difficulties, upon him who sitteth in the heavens; for then it will come to pass that the adversity, vexation, and trials of this world can not only be taken lightly, but can even be smiled at."

Ver. 5. The words of contempt are followed by others of indignation and threatening. *Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.* אָז, *then*, namely, when he has first laughed at and mocked them; others, improperly, at the time of their revolt, or when they believe that they had broken the chains. The laughter directing itself upon the impotence of the revolters is the first subject; the wrath excited by their criminal disposition to revolt is the second. Many expositors, as Calvin, think that there is here a speech of God by deeds, that reference is made to the judgment which he decrees against the insolent revolters, after he has manifested towards them his contempt, but without foundation. Verse 6, where the speech of God follows, shows that the second member here is to be expounded by the first; and in his rage he affrights them with the succeeding words, not the reverse. The actual punishment of the revolters, who even to this day are left standing with the speech, "let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," lies beyond the compass of this Psalm. In it the Lord, the Anointed, and the Psalmist, come forth one after another against the rebels, and endeavour to bring them back from their foolish purpose. It is not till they have shut their ear against all these admonitions and threatenings that the work of punishment properly comes in. With a thundering voice of indignation, before which the impotent sinners quail to their inmost heart, the Psalmist represents the Lord as speaking to them what follows at verse 6.

Ver. 6. *And I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* Few of the expositors take notice of the ו at the beginning, which yet well deserves to be noticed. It is never used without meaning, nor ever elsewhere than where we can also put our word *and* (Ewald, p. 540). The discourse, as now directed more sharply against the insurrection, begins here at the middle. The commencement, which spake of the revolters, confined itself merely

to the preceding circumstances. The *I* here, the Lord of heaven and of earth, stands with peculiar emphasis in opposition to them. Luther: "They have withdrawn themselves from him, but I have subjected to him the holy hill of Zion, and all the ends of the earth. So that it will become manifest how they have been objects of laughter and scorn, and have troubled themselves, and taken counsel in vain." The נסכתי is commonly rendered, *I have anointed;* and of the more recent expositors, Stier alone has raised a doubt against this rendering, without, however, ascribing to it a determinate meaning. But it has been disproved by Gousset on satisfactory grounds. The supposition that נסך, according to its ordinary meaning to *pour*, has also had the sense *anointing*, is supported only by Prov. viii. 23, and the derivative נסיך, *a prince*, from his being anointed, as is thought. But on the passage in Proverbs, all the old expositors give the sense of making or preparing (pouring out=forming), and this sense is decidedly favoured by the context, "from everlasting was I set up or formed," is followed by, "from the beginning, or ever the earth was, I was brought forth." But that the latter word cannot possibly have the meaning of *anointed*, since it is pre-eminently and specially used of princes, holding their dignity in fief of a superior, and in whose case anointing was out of the question. See two decisive passages, Josh. xiii. 21; and Micah v. 4. The word נסוכים, there used, properly means *poured out*, then *formed, invested, appointed*, and refers, according to the just remark of Gousset, to "the production of a prince through the influence and communication of power," either as having been generated thereby, or rather, formed as a piece of workmanship. In the case before us, the signification of *formed* is confirmed by the corresponding words, "I have begotten thee." The expression, "*my* king," is also deserving of special remark. If its peculiar emphasis is not considered, if it is merely expounded as if it were "I have appointed him to be king," the speech of God will then be unsuited to the end which it ought to serve, that, namely, of representing the vanity of the revolt of the kings of the earth. For one might possibly have been set by God as king on Zion, without having any proper claim to the lordship of the heathen world. Then, in opposition to every exposition of a depreciatory nature, we have the corresponding words, "Thou art my Son," through which, as is implied in ver.

8, a much more intimate relation to God is indicated than if he had been an ordinary king. The words, therefore, "I have set (formed) my king," can only mean, "I have appointed a king (as Luther renders much more correctly than our recent expositors) who is most closely related to me." In the setting up or appointing of such a king, for whom nothing less than the whole earth could be a sufficient empire, there was given a proof of the nothingness of all the attempts at insurrection which were now made by the kings against the Lord. The *upon* is most naturally regarded as indicating the place where the Lord's king was constituted and set up by him, implying of course that this place is at the same time the seat of his supremacy. The expression "upon Zion" occurs in Isa. xxxi. 4. We must, with Hoffman, expound—I have set my king (that he be king) upon Zion, and utterly reject the other; I have set my king (that he be king) over Zion, my holy mountain, as in 1 Sam. xv. 17, Saul was said to have been anointed king over Israel. Zion can here be only the seat, the residence of the king, not the territory of his empire—which is, indeed, the whole earth. Zion, the holy mount of the Lord, is the appropriate seat of this king; for as it was from David's time the centre of Israel, so was it henceforth determined to be the centre of the world, for "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem," Isa. ii. 3. The Lord is to govern the whole earth from there. The thought is expressed in Old Testament language that the kingdom should henceforth break through its narrow bounds, and bring the whole world under its sway. Upon הר קדשי, not the mountain of my holiness, but my holiness-mountain, my holy mountain, see Ewald, p. 580. Zion was raised to this honour by its having had the ark of the covenant transferred to it by David. From that period it became the centre of the kingdom of God.

Ver. 7. The speech of the Lord, in proper adaptation to his majesty and indignation, is but short. Next appears the king appointed by God, reiterating to the astonished rebels what has been said by God, and further developing it, *I will declare the statute the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Rosenmüller explains, "I will declare according to, or in terms of, the decree;" but there is no ground for this, as the word ספר is elsewhere coupled with the preposition אל, indicating the object of declaration, Psalm lxix. 26,

as also the similar words יודיע, to make known, דבר אמר, and שמע, see, for example, Isa. xxxviii. 19; Jer. xxvii. 19; Job xlii. 7. The preposition cannot in such cases have the force of something like *of*. It is explained by the circumstance of the relater's or speaker's mind being directed to the matter—the relation or speech goes out upon it. Ewald, p. 602. Taking for granted that the preposition can only mark the thing to be announced, the exposition of Claus: I will declare for a statute, *i. e.* something which must be held to be an unquestionable law, is to be rejected as not simple enough, and hence not suited to the character of the Psalm, which is the reverse of hard or artificial. But Claus is right in giving to the word חק its common signification of *statute, law*, for which most of the modern expositors substitute the arbitrary sense of *decree, sentence*, and then, indeed, rightly conceive that they must bring over to this member the word *Jehovah* to join with the accusative. "I will declare law," contains more than "I will declare decree or sentence." It intimates, that the resolution of the Lord just to be announced, has the force of law, and that it was perfectly in vain to undertake any thing which wars against it. Since the Lord has spoken this, "Thou art my Son," he has at the same time laid upon the heathen the law of serving his Son.

The question now arises, what determination or sentence of Jehovah, having the force of an unchangeable law, is here meant? Rosenmüller, Ewald, and others, conceive, that the reference is to the Divine promise in 2 Sam. vii. But there is no ground for such a supposition. For then, the declaration, "Thou art my Son," would be spoken, not in the sense in which it occurs here, as implying an investiture with dominion over the heathen. And, besides, this exposition would destroy the obvious connection between ver. 6 and ver. 7. What the Son here throws out against the revolters, can only be the further development of that which the Lord had settled against them; the *to-day* becomes quite indeterminate, if it is not referred to that precise day on which the Lord had set his king on Zion; and the expression, "Thou art my Son," can only point to the subject contained in the words, "My King." So that the discourse here can only be of a determination of the Lord, which was issued concerning the Anointed at the time of his appointment: I will declare the law, which the Lord *then*

gave; when he made me his king on Zion, he said to me, Thou art my Son, &c. The Psalmist has only in a general way before him, the terminus of the setting up as king. When Paul refers, in Acts xiii. 33, the words of our text to Christ, in connection with his resurrection from the dead, he just supplies from the fulfilment its more immediate application. The resurrection of Christ was the key-stone of his redemption-work, the starting point of his representation as the Son of God, and his establishment in the kingdom.

The Lord speaks here to the king on the day of his installation as his Son. Where God, in the Old Testament, is represented as Father, where the subject of discourse is the sonship of God, there is always (apart from a few passages not in point here, which speak of him as the author of external being, the giver of all good, Deut. xxxii. 18, Jer. ii. 27, and perhaps Isa. lxiv. 7) a reference made by an abridged comparison to his internal love, as being similar to that of a father toward his son —see for example Psalm ciii. 13, where the comparison is fully stated. In this sense, Israel is in a whole series of passages named God's son. As in Ex. iv. 22: "Israel is my son, my first-born"—where the expression, "my first-born" points to the abridged comparison, as if it had been said, "Israel is dear to me like a first-born son;" Deut. xiv. 1, 2, where the words, "Ye are the children of the Lord your God," are more fully explained by the following, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself above all nations;" Deut. xxxii. 6, where the question, "Is he not thy Father?" is followed by declarations testifying in various particulars, of his fatherly love and carefulness; Isa. lxiii. 16; "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting;" where the name of Father is used to imply what is related at large in ver. 7—15, the things he did in his great goodness towards the house of Israel; Hos. xi. 1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt;" Mal. i. 16, "If I be a Father, where is my honour?" the theme from ver. 2—5, being this, "I have loved you,"—from which, however, a false conclusion is drawn in ii. 10, as if to say, "Have we not all one Father," were synonymous with, "One God hath created us," Jer. xxxi. 9, 20. With a just perception of what

is implied in the abbreviated comparison, the Apostle, in Rom. ix. 4, gathers up what is said of Israel's sonship in the words, "whose is the adoption," υἱοθεσία, the admission into the condition of childhood. In the same sense the relation of David's family to God is, in two passages, described as one of sonship. In 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, the declaration, "I will be his Father, and he shall be my son," is followed by the promise of his ever-abiding love as a sort of interpretation, and in the passage, Ps. lxxxix. 26, &c., which has respect to that in Samuel, "My Father" is placed parallel to "my God, and the rock of my salvation," and is explained by, "my mercy I will keep for him for evermore." Nowhere in the Old Testament is the idea of God's sonship handled with reference to a generation through the Spirit, which Hoffman would have to be the case in all the passages; but these manifestly could not have been all present to him. Nowhere, also, does this expression proceed upon an identifying of creation with generation; and it is an entire mistake for Hitzig to maintain concerning Ex. iv. 22, that all men or peoples are there considered as God's sons, because made by him. Nowhere does the expression "Jehovah's son," as used of kings, point to the Divine origin of the kingly authority, or to the administration of the office according to the mind of Jehovah. Finally, nowhere in the Old Testament is the sonship spoken of with a view to bring out the nature of the Father, as the greater part of the older expositors endeavour to discover here. Now, as we cannot isolate the passage before us from all others, we must here also understand the words, "thou art my son," as denoting the inwardness of relation which subsists between the Lord and his anointed. How inward this relation is, how emphatically sonship is here predicated of the Lord,—which is never, on any other occasion, done of any individual king in Israel, (for, in the two passages before noticed, it is spoken of the whole line of David,) and far less still of heathen kings—is shown by ver. 7, where the sovereignty of the whole earth is announced as a simple consequence of the sonship. In that sense no earlier king of Israel, not even David, the man after God's own heart, was the son and darling of Jehovah. Such an inwardness of relationship cannot properly exist between God and a mere man.

When the sense of the words "thou art my son," is fairly settled, no great difficulty can be found with the parallel clause,

"this day I have begotten thee." If the king is named the Son of God, not in a proper but in a figurative sense, then the reference here cannot be to a proper begetting, as the expression *to-day* would also seem to imply, which confirms a non-literal interpretation of the words, "thou art my Son," an interpretation which takes the begetting only in a figurative sense, as indicating not the actual generation of the person, but the internal relation of the Anointed to God. "I have begotten thee today," spiritually understood, exactly corresponds to "thou art my son from henceforth," spiritually understood; both alike imply that he was brought into the relation of sonship, or received into the innermost fellowship of life. This non-literal, temporal, begetting, has certainly the essential and eternal one for its foundation, which is the one mainly insisted on here by the older expositors and theologians. Figuratively, of the setting up in the dignity of Son of God, the expression is taken by Paul in Acts xiii. 3, as it is also in Heb. v. 5.

Ver. 8. *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* For the king, and the son of the Lord, nothing less than the whole earth is a proper dominion. Ver. 1—3 show, that he had received all, which the love of his Father here freely offered.

Ver. 9. If the nations will not obey thee, my Son, as their rightful lord and king, I give thee the right and the power to chastise them for their disobedience. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* The LXX. render the first clause, "thou wilt feed them with an iron sceptre,"—deriving the verb from רָעָה, to feed. So also the Syriac, Vulgate, and many later expositors. The present punctuation is then held to be incorrect; it is read תְּרֹעֵם, or regarded as a poetical form. But the parallelism requires that the form should be derived from רָעַע, to break or shiver, as is done by the Chaldaic. At the same time, we may perhaps suppose with Stier, that the word carries a sort of ironical allusion to רָעָה, which is so frequently used, comp. 2 Sam. vii. 7, Psalm. lxxxi. 16, Micah vii. 14. שֵׁבֶט, sceptre, was anciently the insigne of sovereign authority. The objections which Rosenmüller and others have brought against the application of this meaning here, are of little weight. It is true, in-

deed, we do not hear of iron sceptres having been actually used, but such only as were of wood, silver, gold, or ivory. But iron is here selected, as being the hardest metal, to indicate the strength and crushing force with which the Anointed would chastise the revolters, and is in perfect accordance with the general language of scripture. The whole is expressed, and without violence, in the comparison used, Jer. xix. 11, to the vessels of a potter. It is, besides, to be remarked, what is omitted by De Wette, who argues from this expression, against the application of the Psalm to Christ, and by Umbreit, who labours to make that denote grace, which is manifestly said of punitive righteousness, that as the Messiah has here to do with impudent revolters, the power committed to him by God is displayed only on one side. That he is as rich in grace to his people, as he is in overwhelming power against his enemies, is evident from ver. 11 and 12. That, in like circumstances, the same exercise of power which is spoken of here, is also exhibited in the New Testament representations of Christ, needs no proof. Those on his left hand, the compassionate, but still righteous Saviour, banishes into everlasting fire; he who treads under foot the Son of God, must experience throughout eternity a much sorer punishment, than he who broke the law of Moses; and, to say no more, the destruction of Jerusalem is constantly represented by the Lord as his work. What might alone have sufficed, is the circumstance, that, in the place referred to of Revelations, the punishment, which Christ is going to execute upon his enemies, is described in the very words of this Psalm. The question, whether what is here said of Christ be worthy of him, resolves itself into this, whether God's righteousness be an actual reality, and, consequently, to be continued under the New Testament. For what is true of God, is true also of his Anointed, to whom he has given up the whole administration of his kingdom. But, that this question is to be answered in the affirmative, will be shewn in our excursus upon the doctrine of the Psalms.

Ver. 10. An admonition to the revolters to consider what had been said, and submit themselves to the king set up by the Lord. Here it comes clearly out, that the object aimed at in the preceding context, by referring to the might of the Anointed to punish, was to induce the revolters to flee from coming wrath, by embracing the offers of his grace and compassion. *Be wise*

now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. And now, since the matter has now been declared, since the supremacy of the Anointed over you rests upon so immoveable a foundation, a severe punishment is ready to alight on the revolters. השכיל, properly signifies, *to make wise,* namely, the actions, the course of behaviour, then to act *wisely,* finally, *to be wise, to understand, discern.* יסר, to instruct, direct aright, warn, in Niph. to be warned, and then to let one's self be warned, to lay the warning to heart, and act according to it. *The judges of the earth,* corresponding to kings in the first clause, the men of authority and rule, because the office of judging is considered as one of their chief functions.

Ver. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.* The serving stands opposed to the resolution in ver. 3 to revolt. The admonition to serve the Lord, calls on them to yield an implicit subjection to his Son and Anointed. Several, following the LXX. and Vulgate, (*gaudeatis cum tremore,*) consider the last words as importing: rejoice that you have found so glorious and good a king, but along with this joy think always of the terrible punishment which must overtake you, if ye withdraw yourselves from his benignant sway. It is well remarked, however, by Stier, that this construction neither agrees with the parallelism, nor with the prevailing idea of the whole context. The kings had scarcely got so far yet, that they could be called on to rejoice, even with the addition of trembling. But still more objectionable is the exposition approved of by De Wette, Stier, Gesenius, and others, "shake with trembling." גיל never signifies anything but to *rejoice,* occurring often in that sense in the Psalms, never to *tremble* or *shake,* not even in Hos. x. 5, where the relative is to be supplied, and the rendering should be: "who rejoice thereupon." Besides, the shaking does not correspond with the serving and doing homage, which require that גילו should express some mark of subordination. Now, this will be the case, if we understand the rejoicing of the acclamations, by which men testify their fealty to their sovereigns, to the "shout of a king," spoken of in Numb. xxiii. 21. In that case, it is only the outward subjection which is primarily demanded for averting the threatened punishment. What rich blessings internal subjection and allegiance brings along with it, is first plainly indicated at the close.

Ver. 12. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.* The kiss was, from

the earliest times, the mark of subjection and respect in the East. Such a kiss was given for the most part not upon the mouth, but upon the garment or the hand of the person kissed. That this custom prevailed also among the Hebrews, appears from 1 Sam. x. 1, where Samuel, after he had anointed the king, as a mark of respect, gave him a kiss. The presenting of the kiss was also a religious usage, as appears from 1 Kings xix. 18, Hos. xiii. 2, Job xxxi. 27. Hence Symmachus translates here, by explaining the figure: adorate. בַּר is found also in Prov. xxxi. 2, for בֵּן. It prevails in the Aramaic, and seems to have belonged to the loftier poetic dialect in Hebrew, which has much in common with the Chaldaic, and this explains why the higher style, the ancient, so rarely occurs in common life. These words were handed down from the primeval times, when the Hebrews stood in closer connection with the people who spoke the Aramaic tongue. The reason on which many account for this form here, is that thereby the cacophony is avoided, which must have arisen from the juxtaposition of בֵּן and פֶּן. Others conceive that בַּר is chosen as being the more dignified and significant expression. Various other expositions which have been tried have partly usage against them, and partly the circumstance that the exhortation of the Son of God here is quite natural after ver. 7. The proper rendering is, in consequence, justified by the greater part of modern interpreters, not excepting those who find the sense thus given not precisely suitable to them, as Rosenmüller, De Wette, Gesenius, Winer, and Hitzig. The exposition of Ewald, "take counsel," is quite arbitrary, since the verb in Pi. invariably has the sense of kissing, and, though בַּר may indeed signify "pure," yet it could not possibly mean "good counsel," without some addition. The second piece of arbitrary dealing is shunned by Koester, who renders, "embrace purity," but the first still remains. Besides, in all these expositions the close connection is overlooked which our verse holds with ver. 1—3. For to "the raging and imagining a vain thing," corresponds the exhortation "be wise and instructed." The revolt against the Lord finds its parallel in the injunction to serve the Lord and rejoice with trembling. But there is still awanting a special exhortation, with reference to the Anointed, which is the main point of the whole, and this must be lost unless בַּר is rendered *son*. That this cannot possibly be awanting, becomes more evident still when we compare the entire section, ver. 6—9, by which pre-

paration is made for it. Koester's objection, that בר must then have had the article, is of no force, as it is here in a sort of transition to being used as a proper name. Comp. Ewald, 659. The king, who is the subject of this Psalm, appears here as Son of God in a sense as exclusive, as God himself is God. One God and one Son of God. Although the title, according to what was remarked above, is much the same as the beloved of God, and we are not to regard it as conveying directly the idea of unity of nature with God, yet so singular a dignity is here ascribed to the Anointed as indirectly points to identity of nature.

The words ותאבדו דרך, though perfectly plain in themselves, have occasioned much trouble to expositors, and have had many false renderings. Every intransitive or passive idea may, in Hebrew, find an immediate limitation, if it is relative; that is, if it admits of being extended to many particular cases. For example, he was sick, his feet; he was great to the throne. This concise manner of speech is easily explained, if we only expand it a little more; he was sick, and this sickness affected his feet, &c. So also here, "perish the way," must mean, "perish as to the way." *The way* is used here, precisely as in Ps. i. 6, as an image of going. *For soon will his wrath be kindled. Blessed are all they who put their trust in him.* כמעט *shortly, soon.* The כ, when denoting limitations of time, retains in some measure its common signification as a particle of comparison. The time up to the beginning of the punishment, when repentance is too late, is like a short period. חוסי *stat. constr. for absol.* This can only take place when the preposition serves merely as a description of the stat. constr. relation; so that, instead of the verb being followed by the preposition and pronoun, it might simply have been חוסיו. This verb with ב always signifies, to confide upon some one, as without us, and never to flee to any one—which has been sometimes taken as its import, from a false interpretation of the phrase, "trusting in the shadow, *i.e.* the support, of any one." Scripture constantly admonishes us to place our confidence in the Lord alone; on which account the word before us is in a manner consecrated and set apart, warning men of confiding in earthly kings; comp. Psalm cxviii. 9: "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes; Psalm cxlvi. 3: "Trust not in princes nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." In the words therefore, "Blessed are all they who put their trust in him," an allusion is

made to the superhuman nature and dignity of the Anointed. Many expositors, who are against the Messianic interpretation, are driven to such straits by this, that they would refer the suffix in בּוֹ, with great violence, not to the Son, of whom mention had been made immediately before, and of whom it is said in this verse itself, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry," but to the Lord—which is an unwilling testimony to the Messianic character of this Psalm, as well as to the superhuman nature of the Messiah in the Old Testament representations of him. Others, as Abenezra, De Wette, Maurer, would refer even the words, "lest he be angry," to Jehovah, overlooking, however, while they do so, the relation in which these words stand to verse 9, according to which, not Jehovah, but the Son, is to break the revolters with an iron sceptre, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel—a manifestation of wrath which they are here exhorted to flee from.

In conclusion, we have a few general remarks to make upon this Psalm. The Messianic predictions in the Psalms, and those in the Prophets, cannot be so incidental in their character, that the distinction between Psalmist and Prophet here at once ceases to exist. We may rather expect this distinction to become here more distinctly marked. The essential nature of the distinction is, that the Prophets, for the most part, communicate the objective word of God, as that had been imparted to their internal contemplation, while the predominating character of the Psalms is subjective, the subject matter taken from some earlier revelation being represented in a contemplative manner, and from the individual relations of the Psalmist, or those of his contemporaries, yet all in such a way that the earlier revelation is often, through the special working of the Spirit of God, carried forward and advanced to a higher degree of clearness. The Messianic interpretation of a Psalm, then, can only be fully justified when we are both able to point to a revelation, through which the writer was incited to give a subjective representation of its contents, and can find a substratum for the particular representation in the relations of the writer, or in those of his time. But both conditions meet in the case before us. In regard to the first, David would be incited to this and the other Messianic Psalms, by means of the promise given to him by God of a perpetual kingdom in his family, 2 Sam. vii. 7, which could

not but be known, after careful reflection, to refer in its proper sense to Christ. In regard to the second, David found, in the circumstances of his own life, ample occasion for his incitement by the Spirit of God to express, in the way and manner he has here done, his hope of the triumph of the promised king his successor. He had too frequently experienced, on the one hand, the contumacy and rebellious disposition of his domestic and foreign subjects; and on the other hand, the help of God in subduing them, to find it at all strange for him to transfer these relations in a more enlarged form to his antitype, which he probably did at a time when his experience in this respect was fresh and lively, about the period of his second great victory over the Syrians, 2 Sam. viii. 6, "And the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts; and the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went;" chapter x. 6, where the Syrians are said to have joined with the Ammonites against David, and verse 19, where we are told, that after David's victory over them, "all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer, when they saw that they were smitten before Israel, made peace with Israel, and served them." In regard, finally, to the progressive development of the truth concerning the Messiah, it consists mainly in this, that the Psalmist here indicates the superhuman nature and dignity of the Messiah, which is brought out still more distinctly in Psalms cx. and xlv. It deserves also to be noted, that the expositors who oppose the Messianic sense, are driven hither and thither, and can nowhere find solid ground for their feet to stand upon. Ewald has contended for a manifest reference to David, and yet has decided upon applying it to Solomon. But against his view we have to set, besides the positive grounds already adduced for the Messianic interpretation, the force of which he unwittingly acknowledges by the violence of his expositions, as on verse 12, not the mere silence of the historical books, of which he would make very light, but their most express and unequivocal declarations. If we should transfer the relations, as they exist here, to a state of general revolt, happening in the commencement of Solomon's reign, we must hold the descriptions contained in the historical books to be entirely mythical. Hitzig has endeavoured to bring down the application to Alexander Jannaeus, a supposition which Koester, in his mild way, pronounces a make-shift. Maurer, again, would carry it up to the time of Hezekiah. He conceives, that

by the people and kings of the earth, might very well be understood the Philistines. In Hoffmann, the non-Messianic interpretation has again fortunately connected itself with David, but only to give way, on the first occasion, to some other charge.

PSALM III.

The Psalmist complains of the multitude of his enemies, who mocked at his confidence in the Lord, ver. 2, 3. He comforts himself by calling to remembrance the support which the Lord had hitherto afforded him, the dignity to which he had raised him, and the manifold deliverances and answers to prayer which he had experienced, ver. 4, 5. He closes with an expression of his elevated joy of faith, ver. 6, 7, and with a supplication to the Lord to help him, as he had been wont to do in times past, and to bless his people, ver. 8, 9. The Psalm consequently falls quite naturally into four strophes, each consisting of two verses, the first of which describes the necessity, the second the ground of hope, while the third discloses the hope itself, and the fourth contains the prayer prompted by the hope. With this division of strophes corresponds also the position of the Selah, which thus comes to stand at the end of a strophe.

The superscription of the Psalm declares it to have been composed when David fled from his son Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 16. It is alleged by De Wette against the correctness of this supposition that the Psalm itself contains nothing in support of it. Would not the tender heart of David, says he, have manifested in the presence of Jehovah, to whom he made his complaint, the deep wound it received from the conduct of his son? In a similar way, De Wette very commonly argues against the Davidic authorship of the Psalms, and the correctness of the superscriptions, from the deficiency in them of any definite allusions to historical fact. Now, it is here first of all to be remarked that a lengthened and particular description of personal relations is a thing impossible for a living faith, which, convinced that our heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask him, is satisfied with mere allusions and general delineations. It is otherwise where the prayer is only in form an exercise of the heart before God, but in reality a discourse of the supplicant with himself. There our inclination discovers itself to dive into

the particulars of suffering, and run out into feeling representations of the circumstances. But still more is it to be considered that the sacred authors of the Psalms, and most of all David, had not themselves primarily in view in their Psalms, and only afterwards gave that a general application, which was throughout individual in its character, but rather from the first designed by the representation given of their own feelings to build up the church at large. The Psalms, which arose out of personal transactions, are distinguished from the didactic Psalms, properly so called by a fluctuating boundary. The former also possess, in a general way, the character of didactic Psalms. If we could imagine the sacred authors of them cast upon a desert island, with no prospect of again coming into contact with men, they would certainly, in that case, have lost both the desire and the impulse to utter their complaints and their hopes in the form of Psalms. For lyric poetry does not, in such a sense, bear a subjective character, as that all respect to those placed in like situations, and agitated by like feelings, can be considered as shut out. David, in particular, had become so closely entwined with the people of God, and knew so thoroughly his Divine mission, to give them a treasure of sacred poetry for instruction, edification, and comfort, that he perceived in all his personal circumstances, from the first, a clear type of similar ones in his brethren the righteous, and acted as their mouth and representative, in regard to the consolation which, though primarily administered to him, he knew was equally destined for them. Hence it was necessary that there should appear a tendency to let the particular retire under the general, and to give only slight indications of the one upon the ground of the other. But such indications, confirming the truth of the superscription, are found in this Psalm. That there is a general resemblance between the position of the Psalmist and David's there can be no doubt. As the report was brought to David, 2 Sam. xv. 13, that the hearts of all Israel were after Absalom, and as chap. xvi. 18, Hushai said to Absalom, "whom the Lord, and this people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide," so the Psalmist complains, "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me, many that say of my soul there is no help for him in God." In both cases alike the distress is connected with a state of war. And as in 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2, Ahithophel said to

Absalom, "I will arise and pursue after David this night, and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid; and all the people that are with him shall flee, and I will smite the king only;" so David says here, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about."

That a high dignity belonged to the Psalmist, appears from ver. 3, where he calls the Lord "his glory," and speaks of him as having "lifted up his head." He is not afraid of myriads of people; the Lord has often already vanquished all his enemies, —both indicating a certain greatness of character in the oppressed. The mention of the people also, in his prayer, ver. 9, agrees well with his being a king, as their condition might properly be regarded in most intimate connection with his own. But if the writer is a king, of whom can we, in truth, think, but David, since, excepting him and Solomon, who is here out of the question, his government being quite peaceful, history makes mention of no other crowned bard, while the dignified simplicity and freshness of the composition bespeak his hand, and its place, also, among the Psalms of David, confirms the supposition? Then, if David is the author of it, we have only to choose between the troubles occasioned by Saul, and those occasioned by Absalom. Hitzig decides in favour of the former. For the refutation of this view, we have no need even to call to our aid the superscription. During the persecutions he sustained from the hand of Saul, David was still not king. And a yet stronger proof is afforded by ver. 4, where David says, that the Lord had often before heard him from his holy mountain. This implies, that the seat of the sanctuary had some time previously been fixed in Jerusalem. But it was not removed there till David had ascended the throne, after Saul's death. A serious answer would scarcely be required, if Hitzig, to obviate this objection, should understand Horeb by the mountain. The whole phraseology of the Psalms repels this supposition, for these know no other holy mountain but Mount Zion. There is not a single passage in all the Old Testament where an Israelite is found looking for help from Mount Horeb, which was only hallowed by ancient reminiscences, and not ennobled by the presence of the Lord in later times. In fine, the past deliverance, from which the Psalmist, in ver. 3, 4, 7, and 8, drew his hopes of escape from present trouble, are manifestly those which occurred in the reign of

Saul. Indeed, David had no such continued series of deliverances to look for now, as he had already experienced. So that we are led by internal grounds to the very same result, which the superscription had from the first announced. And from this we deduce, at the same time, a favourable conclusion for the superscriptions generally. The internal grounds lie here, as the aberrations of recent expositors show, so concealed, that the superscription could not possibly have been derived from a fine combination of these, a thing foreign to antiquity. Ewald maintains very decidedly, both that David was the author of the Psalm, and its special reference to the time of Absalom. In regard to the first, he says, David's rank, livery, and speech, cannot be mistaken; in regard to the last, the author had already stood long upon the pinnacle of human grandeur, had long experienced the highest favour from God, and often already poured forth the feelings of his heart in song. In ver. 8, we plainly recognize the noble spirit of David in that flight, by which he sought to allay the threatening storm, and avert from the people the burden of a new civil war. But we can still more nearly determine the situation of the bard, though only it may be, with the highest degree of probability. The Psalm was, according to ver. 5 and 6, an evening hymn. He there expresses his confidence, that, surrounded as he was with the greatest dangers, he would quietly sleep, and safely behold the light of the following day. Now, this circumstance accords only with the first night of David's flight, after he had gone weeping, barefooted, and with his head covered, over the mount of Olives, and had reached the wilderness, 2 Sam. xvi. 14. Comp. ver. 20. This first night was the most dangerous one for David; nay, it was the only night during the whole period in which the danger was so very urgent, as ver. 6 states it to have been. David's life hung then by a single hair; had God not heard his prayer, "Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness," he had actually perished. Consequently, when the counsel of Ahithophel, to fall upon the king that very night, was rejected by Absalom, the strength of the rebellion was completely broken, and the danger in a manner past, as is manifest from this one circumstance, that Ahithophel, in consequence of that rejection, went and hanged himself.

Two objections have been raised against this conclusion. First, David was then still in a great uncertainty whether the

Lord would again grant him the victory, and restore to him the kingdom, while yet he speaks here at the close with the greatest confidence. The passages referred to in support of this are 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26: "The king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do what seemeth good to him;" and chap. xvi. 12, "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." But these passages by no means indicate a complete uncertainty, and are mainly to be regarded as a simple expression of the humility which scarcely ventures to declare, with perfect confidence, the still never extinguished hope of deliverance, because feeling itself to be utterly unworthy of it; the declaration of this latter feeling, indeed, is the more special object aimed at in the passage. That David, in the midst of his deepest grief, did not abandon his trust in the Lord, appears from his confiding prayer, "Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness," and from his conferring on Ziba the goods of Mephibosheth, 2 Sam. xvi. 4. And then it is not to be forgotten, that those expressions, and the supposed situation, according to our Psalm, were still separated from each other by a certain interval, great enough for admitting of the proportionate change of humour, which even when more decided than in the present case, often takes place in a moment. It is expressly said, that David refreshed himself that first night in the wilderness, which is certainly to be understood, not in a mere bodily sense, but also spiritually, since, in troubles of that nature, a mere bodily refreshment is little regarded. But it is again objected, that, in such a state and condition, men do not write poetry. We might, however, appeal to the poems of the Arabians, which have been composed amid the very turmoil of action; to the fact, that the poet Lebid was writing verses in the very article of death, &c.; but we would rather admit, that there is a certain degree of truth in the objection. The artificial construction of this Psalm, and others composed in similar situations, (as, indeed, it is far from correct to regard the Psalms in general as a pure poetry of nature,) the circumstance that a number of Psalms not unfrequently refer to one and the same situation, as this, for example, and the fourth—these and other things render it very pro-

bable, that in such cases, the conception and the birth of the Psalm were separated from each other—that David did not immediately express in manifold forms what he had personally received in those moments of pressing danger, that he only afterwards, and by degrees, coined for the church the gold bestowed upon himself in such moments. This opinion was long ago indicated by Luther in regard to the present Psalm, who, however, on insufficient grounds—for it is against all experience, that, in the midst of the cross, a lively joy should be felt—adjudges the matter of the Psalm also to a later period: "It is not probable that he should have composed it at the time of his flight and distress. For the Holy Spirit will have a calm, happy, cheerful, select instrument, whether for preaching or for singing. In the conflict, also, man has not understanding, but becomes capable of this only after the conflict is over—reflects then aright upon what has occurred to him under it. Therefore, it is most likely that David composed this Psalm long after, when he came to quiet reflection, and obtained an understanding of the secrets of his life and history, which had variously happened to him."

As in the first and second Psalms, so here again, in this and the fourth, we have a pair of Psalms inseparably united by the inspired writer himself. The situation in each is exactly the same, comp. iii. 5 with iv. 8. The thoughts which agitated his heart in that remarkable night, the Psalmist has represented to us in a piece of two parts. In Psalm iii. his earlier experiences of Divine aid form the chief point, while in Psalm iv. he looks to his Divine appointment as to the rock upon which the waves of revolt must dash themselves to pieces.

It is certainly not to be regarded as an accident, that Psalms third and fourth immediately follow the first and second. They are occupied, as well as Psalm second, with a revolt against the Lord's Anointed, and Psalm fourth especially shows a remarkable agreement with it, first in sentiment, and then also in expression—comp. "imagine a vain thing" in ii. 1 with "love vanity" in iv. 2. In this third Psalm the personal experiences and feelings of David are most prominent, and they formed the basis on which he reared the expectation of the events which were to befal his successor, the Lord's Anointed.

Ver. 1. *Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.* The קוּם with עַל is used of

enemies generally in Deut. xxviii. 7, and does not specially indicate the revolt as such.

Ver. 2. *Many say to my soul, there is no help for him in God.* The greater part of expositors consider לְנַפְשִׁי as a mere description of the pronoun. The words "my soul," indeed, occur in that sense among the Arabians, with whom many words have been clipt and pared so as to lose their original impress; but not so among the Hebrews, with whom the expression still generally bears respect to the thoughts and feelings. There is always a reason why the נַפְשִׁי rather than the pronoun is used. Here the discourse is of enemies, as a matter wounding the heart and soul—comp. Ps. lxix. 20, "reproach hath broken my heart, also Isa. li. 23. That we must not expound with most commentators "*of* my soul," but only "*to* my soul," appears at once, whenever we understand that the word is not used as a substitute for the personal pronoun. No support for the other rendering is to be drawn from the following words, "no help to him in God." For what the enemies say *of* David is so painful to him, that he considers it as spoken personally to himself. It is his soul that is affected by the discourse. It is further to be objected to that rendering, that אמר with ל for the most part signifies, "to speak to some one,"—comp. also the opposite declaration in Ps. xxxv. 3, "say to my soul, I am thy salvation." In the form יְשׁוּעָה the ה is added, as the poets not unfrequently did with nouns, which already have the feminine termination, to give the word a fuller and better sound; Ewald, p. 323. Before this ה the preceding ה fem. becomes hardened into ת, Ewald, p. 37. אין is always negation of being, always signifies, "it is not." By the expression "in God," God is described as the ground and source of salvation. The enemies denied that God would help him, either because, in utter ungodliness, they would exclude God generally from all share in earthly affairs, or thought at least that matters had gone too far with David, even for God's power to help him, Ps. x. 11, or because they considered David as one cast off by him, unworthy of his help, Ps. xlii. 3, 10, lxxi. 11, xxii. 7, 8; Matth. xxvii. 43; and this was to him the source of deepest pain. The last mentioned view of David's case, was that taken by Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 8. He sought to rob David of his last, his dearest treasure: "The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose blood thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand

of Absalom thy son; and behold thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man." This kind of attack was the most painfully affecting. The denial, that God is *our* God, finds an ally in the believer's own consciousness of guilt, amid all his convictions of innocence in regard to particular charges of guilt, and it requires no small measure of faith to gain here the victory. Luther: "As if he would say, They not merely speak as if I were abandoned and trodden upon by all creatures, but as if God also would no longer help me, who, while he assists all things, sustains all, cares for all, for me alone of all things has no care, and ministers to me no support. Though every possible assault, the assaults of a whole world, and of all hell to boot, were concentrated upon one head, it were still nothing to the thought, that God is thrusting at a man—for preservation from which Jeremiah tremblingly begs and prays, xvii. 17, 'Be not a terror unto me, O thou my hope in the day of evil.'"

But while the words, as the analogous ones used by Shimei manifest, and what is written also in 2 Sam. xvi. 18, principally refer to the *will* of God in helping the Psalmist, a reference to his *power* also is not entirely excluded. This appears from the closing words, "Salvation belongeth to the Lord," which carry a respect to the taunt, "no help for him in God," and which vindicate to the Lord, not the will, but the power to help. The *general* name of God, Elohim, is used on account of the contrast that is silently implied to human means of help; every thing is against him on earth, and in heaven too there is no longer any resource for him. The speakers are not, as De Wette supposes, the Psalmist's despairing friends, but his enemies. For thus only could it justly be said, that there were so many of them. De Wette's allegation, that the speech is not godless and spiteful enough for enemies, proceeds upon a misapprehension of its real meaning. For to the man, who with his whole being throws himself upon God, it is even as "death in his bones," to hear his enemies saying, where is thy God? This is the most envenomed arrow which they could shoot into his heart.

The *selah* occurs here for the first time. It is found seventy-three times in the Psalms, and thrice in Habakkuk. It is best derived from שָׁלַח, *to rest*, of frequent use in Hebrew, as well as Syriac. The change of the harder שׁ to the softer ס is very common, see Ewald, p. 29. It can either be taken as a noun, *rest, pause*, or, with Gesenius in his *Thes.*, as the imperative with

IIe parag. and a pause. Primarily, indeed, it is a music-mark. But as the pause in music always comes in where the feeling requires a resting-place, it is of equal import as regards the sense, and the translators who leave it out, certainly do wrong. This view acquires great probability, by a particular consideration of the places where the selah occurs. It generally appears where a pause is quite suitable. Others suppose that the word is an abbreviation of several words. But there is no proof that the practice of such abbreviations prevailed among the Israelites. Koester is inclined to regard the selah as marking the division of strophes. But that it should in many places coincide with such a division is easily explained by the circumstance that the resting-place for the music must generally concur with a break in the sense. And that the selah is properly employed for the purpose of marking the strophe-division, is disproved, by its frequent occurrence, not at the end of a strophe, for example, Ps. lv. 19, lvii. 3; Hab. iii. 3, 9, in which places it is found in the middle of a verse. Besides, if the selah had indicated a poetical, rather than a musical division, it should have been found in the prophets, who have also endeavoured to follow the division into strophes. Habakkuk forms only an apparent exception. For the third chapter of this prophet, in which alone the selah occurs, embodies the feelings which were raised in the church by the announcements of God, those, namely, of the report in chap. i. and of the deliverance in chap. ii.; so that it is really of the nature of Psalmodic poetry, and is adapted for singing and playing as a Psalm, as, indeed, it borrows from the Psalms both its superscription and conclusion. Our view of the matter is confirmed also by Ps. ix. 16, where the selah comes after Higgaion, meditation, (see our remarks there). The position of the selah there decides against Ewald's notion, who thinks the selah must indicate a call to particularly loud playing, deriving the word from a subst. סֶלַע, and that from סָלַל, *to mount*, properly "for elevation," "up," which, in matters of sound, must be synonymous with *loud, clear*. In a verbal point of view also this opinion lies open to serious objections, see Gesenius' derivation of the word in his *Thes.* The right view was substantially given by Luther. The selah, says he, tells us "to pause and carefully reflect on the words of the Psalm, for they require a peaceful and meditative soul, which can apprehend and receive what the Holy Spirit there cogitates and propounds. Which we see, indeed, in

this verse, where the Psalmist is moved with a deep and earnest desire to feel and understand this heavy trial of the soul, wherein also God, though on his side, is silent towards his creature."

Ver. 3. While, according to ver. 1 and 2, the earth presented to the Psalmist nothing but trouble and danger, an helper in the heavens appears to his eye of faith. He comforts himself in God, to whom he looks as his Saviour in all troubles and dangers, as to him he owed his high elevation. If men would also deprive him of his help, he perceives in what God had already done for him a sure pledge of what he was now to expect. Luther: "Here he sets, in opposition to the foregoing points, three others. Against the *many enemies* of whom he had spoken, he places this, that God is his *shield*. Then, as they had set themselves against him, thinking to put him to shame before the world, he opposes the fact, that God had given him honour." Finally, he had complained of the slanderers and scoffers, and against these he rejoices in the thought, that it is the Lord who lifts up his head.—He is now indeed, and, in the feeling of his own mind, forsaken and alone, in respect to the people, but in respect to God, and in his spirit, he is encompassed with a great host, neither forsaken, nor alone, as Christ said to his disciples, John xvi. 32, "Lo the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."—However impotent and oppressed he might seem in the eyes of men, before God, and in the spirit, he is the strongest and the mightiest; insomuch that he reposes on God's power with the utmost confidence and security, like St Paul, who could say, "when I am weak, then I am strong."—Whoever understands, or has experienced such a violent temptation, he will, at the same time, understand how foolishly and wickedly they speak, who say that man can love God naturally above all things. Thou shalt find no one who will bear such displeasure from God; and yet, if there is not the love of God sufficient to overcome that, he is not loved above all things. Therefore the words of this verse are not words of nature, but words of grace,—not of man's free will, but of the Spirit of God,—of a very strong faith, which can see God through the darkness of death and hell, and can still recognise him as a shield, though he seems to have forsaken,—can see God as a persecutor, and yet recognise him as an helper,—can see God as if he would con-

demn, and at the same time recognise him as the Author of salvation. For he who has such faith judges not by what he sees and feels, like the horse and mule, which have no understanding, Psalm xxxii. 9, but keeps close by the word, which speaks of things that man sees not."

And thou, O Lord, art a shield about me; my glory, and who liftest up my head. God is Abraham's shield, according to Gen. xv. 1, and Israel's shield, according to the closing words of the law, Deut. xxxiii. 29. David has an especial predilection for this designation, Psalm vii. 10; xviii. 2; xxviii. 7. The בעד corresponds entirely to the German *um* (Anglice, *about*), and to the Gr. ἀμφί Ew. p. 613, *around me*, giving me protection. —*My glory.* Because David's glory, viz. the high dignity which he possessed, was derived from the Lord; he names *him* his glory—comp. Psalm lxii. 7, "In God is my salvation and my glory." Many expositors falsely render: *the vindicator of my glory*, by metonomy of the effect for the cause. The parallel passages to which reference is made, such as Psalm xxvii. 1, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," are brought in support only by a wrong exposition. The vindication of glory is a consequence of this, that the Psalmist has his glory from God and in God. What has its ground in God, that he will not suffer to be taken away. The *lifting up of the head* marks his deliverance from the condition of the depressed, of one involved in great dangers, who goes mournful and dispirited with drooping head. The discourse here, however, is not of the deliverance to be hoped for in this danger, nor of any particular transaction whatever, but of all the events in the life of David, in which he had learned to call the Lord his deliverer. Upon the circumstance that the Lord had generally been the lifter up of his head, he grounds the hope that in this distress also he would be the same; and from God's having been the source of his glory, he derived the hope that God would not suffer the impious attempts of those now to go unpunished who sought to rob him of it.

Ver. 4. *I cry unto the Lord with my voice, and he hears me out of his holy hill.* The verbs in this verse mark a *habit*, not a single action, just as in Psalm xviii. 3, "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine enemies." Because the Lord is, in respect to David, the one who hears prayer, the surest mark of a gracious condition, he

cannot leave him now, without also hearing him. Luther: "He speaks here chiefly of the voice of the heart; still I conceive that the corporeal voice is not excluded, and hence, that the voice of the heart and feeling, when it is vehement, cannot be restrained, but must break forth into the literal voice. For Christ himself upon the cross cried with an audible voice, teaching us to cry in straits and necessities, and that with all our power, inward and outward, we should call upon the Lord." The answer follows in a real speech. The fut. with vau conv. simply denotes the consequence from the preceding; hence, if we render the former verb *I call*, it is to be translated, not he *answered*, but *he answers*. The holy hill is Mount Zion; from thence the servant of the Lord derives his help. This faith very often finds vent to itself in the Psalms. It had its ground in the promise that the Lord would dwell among his people, and was enthroned in the sanctuary above the ark of the covenant. This promise was given to help the weakness of the Israelites, assuring them, as it did, of a presiding Deity, an incorporating of the idea that God was, in a peculiar sense, their God. If the faithful seek help from the sanctuary, they consequently declare that they expect it, not from Elohim, but from Jehovah—that they hope for that power of the covenant with Israel, upon which alone they could rest with proper confidence. For the Christian, Christ has come into the place of Jehovah, and the holy hill. In regard to the Selah here, Luther remarks: "The word means, that we should here pause, not lightly passing from these words, but reflecting further upon them. For it is an exceedingly great thing to be heard, and to expect help from the holy hill of God."

Ver. 5. *I lay me down and sleep; I awake, for the Lord sustaineth me, i.e.* the assistance of the Lord, which is assured to me, by what he has formerly done, makes me soon fall to sleep, and brings me a pleasant awakening. In this part also, many expositors think the Psalmist speaks of what is past: Often, already, have I laid myself quietly down in the midst of danger, and found sleep. I have not been like those who live in the world without God, tossed with uneasy cares upon their bed, and the issue has always corresponded with my hopes. I have constantly awoke without any evil having befallen me, for the Lord is my stay and help. By this construction, however, according to which this verse would be closely united to ver. 3, 4,

the strophe-division is entirely destroyed, and the Selah at the end of the preceding verse appears then unsuitable. The expression of confidence in regard to the present distress, limited as it must then be to ver. 6, is too short, and the representation of the Psalmist's hope falls from its proper place in respect to the representation given of the ground of his hope. But if we refer also ver. 6, with Venema and others, to the past, we shut up, in a manner, the eye of the Psalmist. It is therefore better to refer the words to his present danger, and regard it as the expression of his joyful confidence, which enabled him in such circumstances to lay himself down and sleep, and to expect also that he would awake in security and peace. The הקיצותי is consequently to be taken as the praet. proph. Faith sees what is not as if it were, the awaking just as surely as the lying down. The passage shows that the Psalm was an evening hymn, as was also the following one, in which ver. 8 remarkably agrees with that now under consideration; and the praet. being there used, leads us to conclude that the Psalmist had already given himself to rest. It was with David according to his faith. Ahithophel found no way, with all his wisdom, for making the attack by night, and David withdrew before break of day beyond Jordan. "What does not happen with like prosperity to all," remarks J. H. Michaelis, with reference to 1 Sam. xxvi. 7—15, where David surprised and could have slain Saul while sleeping in his tent. It is only to the righteous that the promise is given in Prov. iii. 24, "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shalt be sweet." The אני is emphatical, in opposition to the vain expectation of the enemy: I, the person, whom ye imagine to be gone beyond the reach of deliverance.

Ver. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, which they have set against me round about.* The רבבות has reference to רבו and רבים in ver. 2 and 3. There is as little reason here, as in Isa. xxii. 7, (where it may with propriety be rendered, "The horsemen place them towards the gate"), for taking שות intransitively, *set themselves*, in which sense it never occurs.

Ver. 7. The Psalmist prays the Lord to justify the confidence which he had expressed in the preceding strophe, and to fulfil the promise substantially given in the earlier deliverances he had experienced, and on which he grounded his expectation of present aid. *Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. For thou hast*

smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. That is, I cannot but expect this from thee, as thou hast hitherto so uniformly stood by me. The words "save (or deliver) me," stand in opposition to those in ver. 2, "there is no help for him in God." לחי is in the accusative. By the smiting on the cheek, as a piece of insulting treatment, the power and energy is broken, comp. 1 Kings xxii. 24; Micah iv. 14; Lam. iii. 30. We must not limit the design of the smiting on the cheek merely to the driving in of the teeth, with which the wicked, like so many wild beasts, would have eaten the flesh of David, Psalm xxvii. 2. That was only a particular consequence of the smiting in question. The ungodly are parallel to the enemies in the preceding clause. This intimates that David's adversaries were, at the same time, without the fear of God, and directed their hatred against him as identified with the cause of holiness, which also derives confirmation from the history of his case. In particular, it is unquestionable respecting the persecutions he endured at the hands of Saul, to which he specially refers, that individual did not stand arrayed against individual, but principle against principle. The ungodly principle, which was put to the worse in Saul, sought afterwards to regain the ascendant in Absalom, who is only to be considered as an instrument and centre of the unrighteous party. The more, therefore, did the earlier deliverance experienced by the Psalmist form a ground for his present supplication.

That the preterites הכית and שברת are not to be regarded as prophetical, which some consider them to be—that David is rather to be viewed as grounding, what he frequently does, his prayer to the Lord for deliverance upon his earlier deliverances, which arose from his general relation to the Lord, as his present deliverance was to be an expression of the same, is manifest from the causative particle כי, which the expositors referred to seek in vain to render by *yea*, also from the parallel passage, Psalm iv. 1, and most of all, from a comparison of this with ver. 2—4, the subject of which is only repeated again shortly here. As in ver. 5, 6, he rested his hope upon the general relation, so here also his prayer. That relation also of David to the Lord which warranted him to seek help from him, is alluded to in the expression "my God." But it is not absolutely necessary to translate "thou smotest," "thou hast broken;" we may correctly translate with Luther, "thou smitest," "thou breakest

in pieces;" and this rendering is confirmed by ver. 3, 4, where, not so much what the Lord had already done is represented as a ground of hope, as what he was even then doing. The preterite not unfrequently denotes a past, reaching down to the present, see Ewald's *Small Gr.* § 262. In perfect accordance with the spirit of this Psalm, which treats of the destruction here threatened only as a particular form of what may befal the righteous, Luther remarks: "This Psalm is profitable also to us for comforting weak and straitened consciences, if we understand in a spiritual sense by the enemies and teeth of the ungodly, the temptations of sin, and the conscience of an ill-spent life. For there indeed is the heart of the sinner vexed, there alone is it weak and forsaken; and when men are not accustomed to lift their eyes above themselves, against the floods of sin, and know to make God their refuge against an evil conscience, there is great danger; and it is to be feared lest the evil spirits, who, in such a case, are ready to seize upon poor souls, may at last swallow them up, and lead them through distress into doubt."

Ver. 8. *Salvation is the Lord's.* He is the possessor and alone dispenser thereof—he can give it, if he please, even to the most helpless, whom the whole world considers to be in a desperate case. "Though all misfortune, all tribulation and evil should alight upon a head, still there is a God who can then deliver, in his hand is help and blessing." This thought must have been peculiarly comforting to David in his desertion of human helpers and means of deliverance. Since salvation belonged wholly to the Lord, he might rest secure, for the Lord was his God. *Thy blessing upon thy people!* The royal Psalmist shows by these words that his own person lay less upon his heart, than the people committed to him by the Lord—that he claims deliverance for himself only in so far as it could do good to his people. The declaration in the first clause forms the necessary foundation for the prayer uttered in the second. To be able truly to pray from the heart, we must firmly believe that God is really in possession of the treasure, from which he is to communicate to us. In the preceding verse the order is reversed.

PSALM IV.

Encompassed by enemies, the Psalmist calls upon the Lord for help, ver. 1. He turns himself then to his enemies, and admonishes them to cease from their attempts to rob him of his dignity, and from their vain purposes—exhorts them to reflect that the dignity which they sought to take from him was conferred on him by God, who, along with it, had given the Psalmist sure ground for expecting the fulfilment of the prayer which he utters at the commencement; for what the Lord has given he must also preserve, ver. 2, 3. He warns them not to sin farther by giving way to passionate emotions, urges them to meditate upon his admonition in their silent chamber, upon their bed; to cease from their noise and bluster, and, instead of hypocritical offerings, with which they thought to make the Lord favourable to them, to present righteous sacrifices, as also to put their trust in the Lord, instead of boasting to the Psalmist of their own power, and their confidence in human means of support; for nothing but these two, righteous sacrifices and confidence in God, could afford a well-grounded hope of a prosperous issue, with which they vainly flattered themselves so long as they disregarded the necessary conditions, ver. 4, 5. In ver. 6 and 7 the Psalmist declares how much the confidence in the Lord, which his enemies wanted, was possessed by himself. He despairs not in his distress, as many do, but is firmly persuaded that the Lord can and will help him; and this persuasion, wrought in him by the Lord himself, makes him more blessed than his enemies are in the very fulness of their prosperity. In conclusion, he again expresses his firm trust in the Lord, in which he gives himself to sleep, ver. 8.

The strophe-division has been correctly made by Koester thus: 1. 2. 2. 2. 1. He remarks, that the first verse obviously stands by itself; then follows the address to the enemies in two strophes, a third expresses David's delight, and the last verse again stands alone, as "good night." Koester's remark, however, that the selah stands twice a verse too early, is not correct. On the contrary, it forms a most appropriate break in the sense, in the middle of the two strophes, which are directed toward the enemies. The first verse of both strophes contains the dis-

suasion, the second the exhortation; both times there is a pause in the middle, as if to give them space for reflection, to make them thoughtful. In place of the selah, a dash would naturally have suggested itself.

The Psalm begins with a prayer, and concludes with an expression of confidence in its fulfilment. In the middle, the Psalmist seeks to bring himself acquainted with the grounds which tended to assure him of this. It is only when we take v. 2—7 so, viewing it as an address to the enemies merely in form, that the Psalm appears in its real internal connection. The pillars of the bridge, which in v. 2—7, is laid between the distress and the deliverance, the prayer and the confidence, are, 1. The Psalmist's election, and the circumstance, that the enemies were striving against this divine fact, when they sought to rob him of what God had given him. 2. The Psalmist's sincere and fervent piety, (the "godly one," in v. 3) the enemies' hypocritical and outward sanctity, implied in their needing to be called on to offer sacrifices of righteousness in v. 5. 3. The Psalmist's lively trust in God, v. 6, 7, while the enemies were placing their confidence not upon the Lord, but only upon human means of help—comp. what is written in v. 5, "put your trust in the Lord."

Expositors for the most part lay the sense of this Psalm also in the events of Absalom's conspiracy, and that they are right in doing so, appears from the following considerations:—1. The Psalmist charges his enemies, v. 2, 3, with seeking to rob him of the glory conferred on him by God. On this one ground we cannot refer the Psalm, with some, and in particular Calvin, to the persecutions of Saul. It pre-supposes a domestic revolt against the Psalmist, after he had actually ascended the throne. 2. The Psalm so remarkably agrees with the preceding one, which belongs to the period of Absalom's conspiracy, that it must of necessity be referred to the same period—comp. "my glory," in v. 2 with iii. 3, and v. 8 with iii. 5. The objection of De Wette, that the Psalmist makes no mention of a faithless son, but only of men generally, is removed, besides what has been already said on Ps. iii., by the remark, that Absalom was the mere tool of an unrighteous party hostile to David, making his vanity subservient to its own purposes, and hence David, who regarded this son as the seduced, rather than the seducer, directs his speech mainly towards these. The other objections proceed upon a false view of v. 5, 7. So also Hitzig's opinion, that the

Psalm must have been composed after the danger spoken of in the preceding one had passed away, is founded upon a false exposition. Claus endeavours to show, that all the apparently individual allusions in the Psalm might possibly be also of a general nature, but he has made nothing by that—as it is of course to be understood, that the individual always carries at the same time a general aspect, and is only indicated by a few delicate strokes on the ground of what is general. We have already seen how this structure of the Psalm arises out of the nature of things —out of the living faith of the author, which does not admit of a long historical narrative of its circumstances, and also from the sacred writer having all along in view the wants of the whole community. How much the peculiar phraseology of the Psalms fit them for the general use of the church, is easily perceived. Only glance for a moment at this Psalm. How much less edifying should it have been, had David, in place of *glory*, which can be taken in the most extended sense, so that the very least can possess and lose it, put his *kingly* honour and supremacy; or in place of *vanity* and *lies*, under which every one can think, according to his situation, of that kind of calumny and deception to which he may be peculiarly exposed, had substituted the foolish counsels of Absalom, and his companions in particular! Ewald, following many of the older expositors, properly concludes from v. 8, that the Psalm was composed as an evening hymn and prayer. Night is the season when painful feelings are most apt to stir up and inflame the hearts of those who are far from God. That this night was the first of David's flight, is probable from v. 7, in addition to the reasons already adduced in our introduction to the preceding Psalm.

To the chief musician. The word לַמְנַצֵּחַ, which stands at the head of fifty-three Psalms, is considered by many as an Aramaic form of the infinitive. They render it, either "for singing," or as Claus more definitely, "for singing through," with reference to that kind of music, to which the particular melody is continued through different strophes, in opposition to such airs as are suited to each part. Both renderings, however, are quite arbitrary, and not less arbitrary is the explanation given of the form. The Aramaic form of the infinitive, is never found in Hebrew, and even this could not be taken as proposed here. The form can only be the partic. in Piel with the article prefixed. Now נִצַּח

occurs frequently in the books of Chronicles and Ezra, in the sense of "standing before or over," and indeed, as has been remarked by Ewald, only of the orders and directions which were committed to the chief of the Levites—uncertain whether incidentally, or whether the word is a Levitical technical term—and in 1 Chron. xv. 2, it is specially used of the directors of the musical exhibition. What, then, could be more naturally thought of in a superscription to the Psalms, than a leader of musicians? The word of itself signifies merely a foreman, and it must be gathered from the context, if it is a foreman of music that is specially meant. From the article, which may with perfect propriety be understood generically, we are not to conclude with Ewald, that there was a master of music placed in the temple with a standing authority. The title, "to the chief musician," is of importance in so far, as it affords a proof that the Psalms which contain this in the superscription were intended for public use in the temple. It is only with a reference to this that the word could hold the place it does in the superscriptions. This place must have been assigned it by the authors themselves of the Psalms, thereby begetting a very favourable prepossession in behalf of the proper originality of the other parts of the superscriptions. Ewald might, indeed, in order to neutralise this testimony for the superscriptions, translate here: *of the chief musician*, as, according to him, the word indicates that the Psalm was actually set to music, and performed by the chief musician. But for the other rendering: *to the chief musician*, meaning that it was delivered up to his care to be prepared for being sung, (in which case the word must have been prefixed by the author himself, before the musical performance actually took place,) a decisive proof is afforded by Hab. iii. 19, the more important in its bearing on our exposition here, as the prophet manifestly imitates the superscription of the Psalms. The words לִמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתַי with which the song of the church is there closed, can be no otherwise explained than as meaning, "to the chief musician upon my (Israel's, for it is the church that speaks through the whole chapter) stringed instrument," assigned to the chief musician, that he might publicly sing it with the accompaniment of sacred music in the temple, which was in a manner the national music. *Negionoth* is the general name for all stringed instruments. The whole superscription, then, of the Psalm, is to be understood thus: A Psalm of David to be delivered to the

president of the musicians, that he may arrange for its exhibition with the accompaniments of stringed instruments.

Ver. 1. *Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness; thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.* The "my God" is here rendered more definite, by an additional word. The Psalmist indicates that he expected help, not on account of any partial predilection entertained for him by God, but from his God being the righteous one, who could not but afford aid to his righteous cause. In this he supplies a rule for every prayer in like extremities. To beg help, while we are not able to name God in connection with it, is like a slandering of God. For, instead of wishing that God would act according to his nature, one then wishes him to deny his nature. The suffix refers, as it very frequently does, to the compound idea, Ewald, p. 580. It is used precisely in the same way; for example, in Psalm xxiv. 5, "the God of his salvation," = his salvation-God. The commonly received exposition, which takes "thou God of my righteousness," for "thou who dost accept of my righteousness," can find no parallel for its justification.—בצר הרחבת לי, properly, *in straits thou makest me large, wide.* Narrowness is a Biblical term for misfortune, as broadness for prosperity. The meaning is, "Full of confidence, I call on thee for help, who hast already given me so many proofs of thy goodness, hast so often already delivered me from trouble, whose proper part it is to do this." The verb may be rendered either, "thou hast enlarged,"—in which case David would ground his prayer for help merely upon past deliverances,"—or, "thou dost enlarge," David being then understood to comfort himself with the thought, that God stood generally to him in the relation of a helper in the time of need. This latter mode, which appears in Luther's rendering, "Thou who comfortest me in distress," is to be preferred on this account, that the words, according to it, briefly comprehend what had been expressly represented in ver. 3 and 4 of the preceding Psalm, which stands so closely related to this. The Psalmist shortly resumes in these words what in Psalm iii. had been taken as the foundation of his hope of deliverance, and thereafter applies himself, in the following verses, to a new ground of hope, his divine election. The words have suffered a false exposition in two ways. First, by De Wette, who converts the pret. into an imperative. Grammatically, this is inad-

missible, for in such cases the vau relat. never fails, Ewald, p. 554. Small Gr. § 621. The parallel passages adduced by De Wette are to be explained differently. And, granting that a few particular passages might be found, in which an exception occurs to the general rule, yet we should not be justified in adopting here an usage which is certainly very rare, and only to be admitted in the greatest necessities, since the exposition we prefer gives an easy and natural sense, and is confirmed by the parallel passages in the preceding Psalm. Comp. Psalm xxvii. 9, where "Thou who art my helper" corresponds to "thou God of my salvation."—Then by Hitzig, who finds here a deliverance from a certain particular distress, the same that was spoken of in Psalm third. But that this still continued, is evident from the extraordinary agreement which the whole subject of this Psalm has with that of the preceding one. And still more decidedly will this appear, if we compare our Psalm with iii. 2—4, and especially ver. 7.

Ver. 2. *O ye sons of men, how long shall my glory be for shame,* or be a matter of reproach, *i. e.* when will ye at length cease wantonly to attack my dignity. According to De Wette, the expression, *sons of men,* must be viewed as standing simply for men. But in that case it would certainly have been, not בני איש, but the more common expression, בני אדם. The correct view was perceived by Calvin, who says: "It is an ironical phrase, through which he mocks their insolence. They conceived themselves to be noble and wise, while still it was only a blind rage which impelled them to their shameful course." The word איש, like that of *man,* when used emphatically, conveys the idea of strength. That the expression is sons, not of men, but of man, gives rise to the objection, that it is difficult to see why it should be the one, and not the other. The revolters considered themselves as sons of man, by and for themselves, as *normal-men.* In reference to this foolish self-confidence, the Psalmist admonishes them, in ver. 5, to put their trust in God. To the same high-mindedness, indicated in this from of address, the subject-matter of the remainder of this verse, and of the next one, points; for it was that which led them to regard the glory of him whom God had chosen as an intolerable thing. Agreeably to the character of the whole Psalm, it is mildly described, and but softly indicated, as barely possible. The expression, by itself, properly marks no more

than power and might. It is all the milder that the secret fault discovers itself on the field of public observation; it freely accords to them power and strength. Besides, the expression "sons of man," is, in many places, used unquestionably in an emphatical sense. So, for example, in Psalm xlix. 2, where "the sons of man," and "the sons of men," stand in precise opposition to each other, as denoting rich and poor, Psalm lxii. 9; Prov. viii. 4. If this emphatical sense is rejected here, instead of a very significant address, which carries us into the inmost heart of the subject, opens up to our view the ultimate ground of the behaviour charged in what follows upon those here addressed, there remains only a quite meaningless form of speech. The question, "how long," might appear in opposition to what we conceive to have been the situation of the Psalmist, to import that the improper treatment of the enemies had already continued a long period. But in so wicked a project as that of Absalom's revolt, such a question is not out of place, at the very commencement. That the words, "my glory," are not a mere circumlocution for his person, is obvious from the contrast in which it stands with "shame."

How long will ye love vanity and seek after lies? By the vanity and lies, Kimchi understands the sovereignty of Absalom, which is so called, because it was to have no continuance, and would disappoint the hopes of the rebels. To the same effect also, Calvin. He remarks, that the revolt was very truly named *a lie*, on this account, that the persons concerned in it deluded themselves and others regarding the real nature of their attempt, which they decked out in the most splendid colours. But a comparison with such passages as Psalm xxxiv. 14, "seek peace," Zeph. ii. 3, "seek righteousness," "seek meekness," shows that the *seeking* is taken as parallel with *loving*, or, at the most, in the sense of being at pains with, to go about a thing,—and a comparison with such passages as Psalm lxii. 4, "They only consult to cast him down from his excellency, they delight in lies, they bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly," Isa. xxviii. 15: "We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Psalm v. 6 renders it probable, that by *lies* is to be understood the mass of falsehoods through which the rebels sought to help forward their bad cause; and if this be the case, then by *vanity*, as in Psalm ii. 1, is primarily to be understood, vanity in a moral sense, things of no value. How

important a part lies played in the revolt of Absalom, may be seen from 2 Sam. xv. 7, 8, by a signal example. Without the lie of Absalom, which is there recorded, the whole rebellion would have been strangled at the first.

Ver. 3. *But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.* The meaning is, "Think not that it is of men I have become king; God himself has chosen me, whom he knew to be a pious worshipper, to that honour, from among the people; and ye who presume to fight against me really fight against him, who also will take the management of my cause." The close connection between this verse and the preceding one is marked by the ו at the commencement. This is to be explained by considering the "how long," &c., as virtually saying, "Cease now at length to defame my glory." If this reference to the preceding verse is correctly made, we shall then not think of expounding הפלה by *distinguishing*, and of discovering an allusion in it to the manifold proofs he had received of Divine favour. It can only denote his separation to that which the revolters strove to take from him, viz. his glory, his kingly honour. The word, besides, constantly has in Hiph. the sense of *singling out* or *separating*, comp. Ex. viii. 16, and especially xxxiii. 16, where Moses says to the Lord, "And we are separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." As the Lord there separated Israel from all nations, so here his godly one out of Israel; and that this meaning also prevails here, and not the one received by many commentators of *distinguishing*, is still farther manifest from the following לו —God has set apart for himself. Luther translates: But know that the Lord wonderfully guides his holy one. He has combined לו with חסיד and הפלה he has taken as of like signification with הפלא which is also found in a number of MSS. Hitzig, too, gives a similar exposition: that God does wonders for his holy one. This reading, however, is not sufficiently confirmed; and פלא and פלה never interchange with each other; nor does the latter lose its ordinary signification of *separating* in Psalm xvii. 7: Separate out of thy grace, out of the number of the common, show me thy singular loving-kindness. Parallel to this mode of expression, according to the only correct explication, is the passage Psalm lxxviii. 70, 71: "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob

his people, and Israel his inheritance." When the Psalmist designates himself as the "godly one," he declares the ground on account of which God had selected him, or had called him out of the mass of the people to be his highest servant in his kingdom. Venema: "As one whom he knew to be well affected both toward himself and toward men." Comp. 1 Sam. xv. 28, where Samuel says to Saul, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *who is better than thou;*" also 1 Sam. xvi. 7. חסד signifies love, and is used, not merely of the love of God, but also of human love, of man's love to God in Hos. vi. 4: "Your goodness (love) is as the morning cloud," and Jer. ii. 2; of love toward men in Hos. vi. 6, "I have desired mercy (love) and not sacrifice;" and Isa. xl. 6, where the goodliness or love of the flesh is the love which men show to their fellow-men. חסיד is such a person as has love toward God, and toward his brethren. The form with Chirek has not only, arising out of the passive form כתבי a purely passive signification, but it also frequently forms, arising out of the form with Zere, adjectives of intransitive signification (Ew. p. 234), so that there is scarcely need for saying with Winer that a passive form is here taken actively. That love, as being a characteristic mark of the righteous, should be one of his standing designations, is important from the bearing it has on the religious moral standard of the Old Testament, as showing how little a dead servile spirit distinguishes it. The Psalms, in this respect, may be said to rest upon the law; for there already appeared the two commands of love to God and to our neighbour, as those in which all particular ones lie enclosed, and the fulfilment of which carries along with it obedience to all others, while without that this is not possible. The command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is delivered in Lev. xix. 18; love to God is expressly announced in the Decalogue as the fulfilment of the law, Ex. xx. 6; and the precept of love to God constantly returns in Deut., agreeably to its design of forming a bridge between the law and the heart, and is expressly declared to be the ἓν καὶ πᾶν, the one thing needful, the fulfilling of the whole law, Deut. vi. 8; x. 12; xi. 13. Hupfeld (in De Wette) has revived another explication, according to which חסיד signifies, not such an one as has love to God and his brother, but such an one as experiences the love of God. But for exposing the false position on which this view

is grounded, the passages already cited are sufficient, showing, as they do, that חסד is never used of love to God; and that such a view has, with good reason and justice, been of late years abandoned, is clear from the fact that חסיד is used of God himself, Jer. iii. 12; Psalm cxlv. 17; and from חסידה the loving, avis pia, being applied to the stork.

It is a good conclusion which David here draws: The Lord hath chosen me, therefore will he hear my prayer against those who seek to rob me of the honour conferred by him. This conclusion may be appropriated by all those who are assailed in the particular station and calling which God has bestowed on them; they may confidently expect the Divine help to stamp all the projects directed against them as vanity, and the reasons by which these may be justified as lies. But everything depends on this, that the major be right; and therefore were our fathers so extremely careful and conscientious in the inquiry, whether their call were truly a Divine one. In David's case, it was a matter of great comfort that he could be perfectly certain of his election—that he had not arrogated to himself his calling, but had quietly waited till it was conveyed to him by God. All his composure during Absalom's insurrection was founded on that. What could he well have said to the rebels, if he had himself, at an earlier period, rebelled against Saul, and driven him from the throne? Besides, the unquestionable reference in the words, "The Lord will hear when I call to him," to those in ver. 1, "Hear me when I call," renders it manifest that the address to the enemies is a mere form, by which the Psalmist endeavours to satisfy himself regarding the grounds he had for thinking their project vain, and expecting deliverance, as if he had said, Lord, hear my prayer, yea, thou wilt do it; for thou thyself gavest me the glory of which my enemies would fain plunder me.

Ver. 4. *Be angry and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still.* After the example of the LXX. ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε, רגז, is to be taken in the sense of *being angry*. The exhortation to be angry changes itself into the opposite, in consequence of the condition therewith annexed, as in such a case anger is inseparable from sin. It is substantially as if he had said, Sin not through anger. The peculiar manner of expression corresponds with the mild character of the whole Psalm, and conveys this meaning: I would indeed

permit you anger if the only effect were the injury which might thereby alight upon me, but since you cannot be angry without sinning, I must warn you to abstain from it. The turn given to it by Augustine, Luther, and others, is inadmissible: "Be angry if you please, but see that ye do not proceed so far as to think, say, or do what is hurtful to your souls, and so sin against God, yourselves, and your neighbours." In the supposed case, to be angry and to sin were one and the same thing. "Be angry and sin not," is also to be taken as an unconditional command, Eph. iv. 26, which is a quotation from this verse, as is manifest not only from the literal correspondence between the words of the Apostle and the LXX. here, but also from the reference which the following, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath," evidently has to the clause "commune with your own heart upon your bed." The separation between being angry and sinning, is there also only an apparent one, which should serve the purpose of bringing out more distinctly the internal connection. The exposition of Harless: Be angry in the right manner, so as not to be guilty of sin, has, in addition to the words, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath," which he does not find it easy to dispose of, to contend with the whole context, which, both before and after, contains nothing but express and positive precepts, and still more particularly the command in ver. 31, to put away all bitterness and anger. The exposition adopted by a great many, *stand in awe, tremble,* gives a very tame sense, as compared with the one received by us. The *trembling* is also too bald, and not that, but being angry, forms the proper contrast to being silent or still. The whole verse bears respect to the blustering passion of the enemies. Besides, the trembling does not accord with the tone of this Psalm, which is throughout full of soft representations; neither would it suit the character of these revolters, "we will tremble and not sin," while it would to say, "we shall not commit sin by being angry;" nor, finally, does the trembling agree with the dissuasive character which is peculiar to this verse and ver. 2, while it would destroy the boundary line between it and ver. 5, which, along with ver. 3, contains the exhortation.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed. In the retired chamber, upon their couch, in the lone silence of night, the revolters must sometimes come to meditate the affair, which hitherto they had considered only in their uproarious meetings,

at which the better voice of the heart was suppressed by the tumultuous outbreak of the passions. משכב never signifies the sofa or divan, on which the orientals sit at their conferences. By imagining this, Michaelis and Dereser have both given a false meaning to the passage. To a contrast of actual silence points also דמו, not "rest, desist" from your sinful projects, as De Wette would have it, but, according to the usual and radical signification, "be silent," which is here required by the obvious reference it carries to the speaking or communing with their hearts, and calls on them to leave off the debates and wild cry of rebellion. It is to be remarked, however, that אמר (rendered in Eng. ver. *commune*) differs as much from דבר as our *say* from *speak*. That the former can never stand absolutely, but only in connection with what some one has spoken, see Gesen. *Thes.* In many cases, where the thing spoken is easily gathered from the context, it is left to be supplied by the reader. So, for example, in Ex. xix. 25, "And Moses went down to the people, and said to them." The sacred writer does not expressly say *what*, because it had just been mentioned in ver. 24 as God's commission to Moses. In like manner, Gen. iv. 8, "And Cain said to Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field." What Cain said, "let us go into the field," is not expressed, as any one can easily borrow it from the following words, "when they were in the field;" comp. also 2 Chron. ii. 9; xxxii. 24. Now, here the limitation is to be derived from what immediately precedes: Let us not sin through anger. Some such saying, then, necessarily follows the silence. For when one is fairly driven into himself, external noises and tumults cease of themselves. Besides, the admonition to the revolters acquires a peculiar character from being, according to what was remarked in the introduction, an evening hymn. David exhorted his enemies to do that which he had just been doing himself, and from which he was deriving a rich blessing. In the stillness of the night he employs himself, when lying on his bed, with his God, and hence is it that every thing is so clear to him, so full of light. Had his enemies but an experience of the same blessing! What they would thus gain is shown by our Psalm, in the results of David's one night's meditation. The tone is so calm, so mild, expressing no bitterness against the proud rebels, but a tender pity and compassion for them, that they should rush so heedlessly on destruction. The selah leaves them time, as

it were, to take to themselves the admonition to be angry and sin not, and then the *dehortation* is followed by an *exhortation*.

Ver. 5. *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.* Expositors generally are at a loss regarding the matter of this verse. Thus Ringeltaube remarks: "It is difficult to account for such a transition, and to understand why impious blasphemers should so suddenly be called to confidence in God." Venema thinks, that an admonition to repentance and conversion might rather have been expected. The key to a right understanding of it is the remark, that what here is spoken in the form of an exhortation, like v. 4, really contains, as to its matter, a dissuasive from evil. The stress is to be laid upon "righteousness," and "the Lord:" bring not a hypocritical, present a righteous offering, confide not upon human resources, but confide in the Lord; it is as if he had said, the victory cannot belong to my enemies, since they want the necessary conditions of Divine aid, righteousness and confidence in God. Many understand by sacrifices of righteousness, such sacrifices as men were by the law bound to present. Others take the expression figuratively, as importing sacrifices consisting in righteousness, or in righteous actions. The unsuitableness of the former view is apparent from the parallel member, "trust in the Lord," which leads us to expect here also not an external, but an internal requirement; it appears, further, from the entire religious character of the Psalms, in which, as well as in the Prophets, the feelings of the mind are constantly brought out in bold relief, as contrasted with every thing outward; and, finally, from the condition of David's enemies, who wanted not an hypocritical, but a true piety. The relation of this verse to the preceding one comes also in confirmation of the same. For if the discourse there is intended to dissuade from moral guilt, the exhortation here cannot be directed to something merely external. However, we must reject the second exposition, not less than the first. Such passages as Ps. li. 18, 19, do not justify us in considering the sacrifices here mentioned as spiritual ones. For the opposition expressed there between spiritual and fleshly sacrifices, does not exist here. To us sacrifices of righteousness are neither legal offerings, nor offerings consisting of righteousness, but *righteous offerings*, such as were presented by a righteous man, or on a principle of righteousness—see Ewald, p. 572. So unquestionably is the expres-

sion used in Deut. xxxiii. 19, "They shall call the people to the mountains, there shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness," where no respect is had to any impropriety in the kind of sacrifices. The quality here demanded was not found in the sacrifices of the enemies of David, as may be clearly perceived by looking to the sacrifices of Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 7, &c., which might well be regarded as sacrifices rendered in the service of unrighteousness. The passage is correctly expounded in the Berleburg Bible: "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, therefore must ye desist from your sin and anger, and fulfil your obligations. For otherwise your faith will be vain, and your whole service unprofitable, even though ye sacrifice ever so much. It is not enough to bring sacrifices, but they must also have a righteous ground. Whosoever hates his brother, he can bring no acceptable gift to the altar; his very prayer is sin. The Lord hates the religious services which are connected with unrighteousness, enmity, injury to neighbours, and renouncement of dutiful obedience. A penitent and contrite heart is required to a right sacrifice, Ps. li. 17, and a humble and thankful faith, Ps. l. 14, 23, that one may present himself to God as a living sacrifice, and his members as instruments of righteousness, Rom. vi. 13; xii. 1." The *righteousness* sought here as a basis for the sacrifices must come in the room of that sinful anger, which was directed against the Lord's chosen one, and of which the Psalmist had admonished the rebels in the preceding verse. The exhortation "to trust in the Lord," proceeds also upon an implied contrast. The rebels, guided in their fleshly state of mind by the visible, believed their cause to be sure, because, while they possessed all human means of support, David, on the contrary, was bereft of all. David discloses to them the deceitfulness of their hope, and the danger which belonged to their condition, by calling on them to "put their trust in the Lord." The same contrast, which is here silently implied, is expressly marked in Ps. xii. 5; xlix. 7; that it is really made here, is manifest from a comparison of v. 3 and 8.

Ver. 6. *Many say, who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* According to the common interpretation, there is no connection between this verse and the preceding one. So, for example, De Wette remarks: "without farther connection the Psalmist passes on to the thought, &c." But the mere statement of this, is to produce an evidence

against the soundness of the interpretation. The Psalmist had said in the preceding context, that the enemies wanted the indispensable pre-requisite of salvation, confidence in the Lord, and here he declares, that he had this pre-requisite himself. While in times of distress many said, who will show us what is good? he replies, in firm confidence on God, Lord, lift on us the light of thy countenance. The words, "who will show us good?" (*i. e.* "give us to possess it,") several expositors regard as a kind of wish, as importing a desire that they could get some one to do so. But the words are rather the expression of hapless, wretched despair, which gives up all hope, because it can find no ground for this in the visible aspect of things. Whence can we properly look for help? Neither in heaven, nor on earth, is there any one who is willing and able to impart it to us. In opposition to this despair of unbelief, David in the second clause places the hope of faith: I despair not, as many do, when earthly things afford no ground of hope; I know that a single gracious look from thee, O Lord, can turn away our distress. To the many, who speak so, there is silently opposed: but *I* say, on the other hand. He does not ask, who? He knows the man, who can help. Perhaps David, while he speaks of many, has especially in his eye his companions in misfortune, who had remained true to him, and who, because they stood not upon the same high ground of faith, might partly have given way to despair. This supposition, however, is not absolutely necessary. The words, *upon us*, may be explained by David's placing before him the many, who generally despond in adversity. Only grant, O Lord, that on me, and on all who may, like myself, find themselves in troubles above the reach of human counsel, the light of thy grace may shine, that so help may be afforded us. נְסֵה is to be taken, with most Hebrew expositors, for a different form of writing נְשָׂא, imperat. from נשׂא, to lift up. The expression *of lifting up the countenance or faces* is used in the original passage, Numb. vi. 26, of the Levitical blessing, to which David here unquestionably alludes: "Lift upon us, O Lord, the light of thy countenance," is formed out of the two passages, "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee," v. 26, and "The Lord make his face shine on thee," v. 25. This evident reference to the original passage renders it impossible for us to adopt any other explanation of the form נסה. David knows, that it was not in vain the

Lord had commanded to bless his people with these words, and grasps, with firm faith, the promise which is contained in them. Similar allusions to the blessings of the priests are not rare in the Psalms, for example, Ps. xxxi. 16; xliv. 3; lxxx. 7. "The light of thy countenance," several: "Thy light serene countenance," still better, "The light of thy presence," thy countenance, which is light, which, lifted upon us, or directed towards us, dispels like a clear light the thickest darkness of adversity, before which the night of sorrow flies away, as the literal night before the sun. To lift the countenance on any one, when used of God, who sits enthroned high above us in the heavens, is all one with looking towards one. But on whomsoever the Lord looks, him he favours; whosoever is an object of displeasure to him, before him he hides his countenance, from him he turns indignantly away, and abandons him to wretchedness and despair.

Ver. 7. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.* The Psalmist declares, how blessed he was in this confidence upon the Lord. The hope, which the Lord himself had awakened in him, in regard to the return of his grace, makes him more joyful in the midst of his distress, than his enemies were while they reposed in the lap of fortune and abundance. The verse, like the preceding one, with which it is closely connected, still belongs to the representation given of the Psalmist's confidence in God. How deeply-grounded must that be, when it can make so blessed! The contrast is not between God, (apart from his gifts,) the only and highest good which David possessed, while his enemies wanted it, and the perishable goods which were in the hands of his enemies; but rather a contrast between the hope of a coming salvation, which rested upon God, and the possession of such an one as is without God in the world; nay, has God for an enemy. Comp. Hab. iii. 18, where, after a description of heavy calamities, it is said, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation."—*More than in the time*, elliptically for, *more than their joy in the time.* The suffix in the two last nouns is to be referred to the enemies. The abundance of corn and wine is an individualizing mark of plenty and success. At first sight, such a particular mark scarcely seems to accord with the circumstances of the period of Absalom's revolt, and De Wette has unquestionably some show of reason in arguing from this against the reference of the Psalm to that period. But if we only com-

pare 2 Sam. xvi. 1, 2, we shall be satisfied that this trait is entirely suitable to the period in question. David was entertained in his flight by the beneficence of one of his subjects—Zibah brought forth bread and wine, that he and his servants might eat and drink in the wilderness.

Ver. 8. The faith of the Psalmist draws from all that precedes the general result. It is this, that he will rest secure amid all surrounding dangers, under the protection of the Lord. *In peace*, secure, and without any thing being able to frighten me, *I will both lay me down to sleep, and shall go to sleep.* יָשַׁן is not to be taken in the sense of *sleeping*, but in the original—as the comparison with the Arabic shows—and the predominating one of *going to sleep*,-Gen. ii. 21; xli. 5; 1 Kings xix. 5, &c. Only then is the *both, at the same time*, in its proper place; he alone, who feels himself in perfect security, can go to sleep when he lies down. The second clause is rendered by many expositors, *For thou, Jehovah, alone wilt make me dwell in safety;* thou wilt afford me what the assistance of the whole world cannot do; thou wilt support me against mine enemies, and grant me rest and security. David here places his present position in contrast with his earlier one. Calvin: "He reflects with satisfaction on the guardianship of God as sufficient for him, so that he can sleep not less securely under it, than if he had watches stationed all around him, or was defended on every side by many companions." Others, again, refer the *alone* not to God, but to the Psalmist: "Thou, O Lord, makest me to dwell alone, (and) secure," conceiving that the words carry an allusion to Numb. xxiii. 9, Deut. xxxiii. 28, "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine. De Wette takes Sachs for the author of this latter exposition. But it is to be met with in many of the older commentators; for example, in Venema. Luther, too, brings out very prominently the reference to Deut. xxxiii. 28, although he translates, "For thou, Lord, alone makest me dwell in safety." —"A manner of speech (says he) not uncommon among the prophets; as if he would say, indeed, Lord, in that I dwell safely, thou art fulfilling what thou didst promise through Moses, Israel shall dwell in safety alone." Now, that the *alone* is really to be referred to the separation of the Psalmist from his enemies, and his security against their attacks, the passage in Deut. is the more decisive, as the corn and wine there mentioned had just

been referred to by the Psalmist, and as the prayer, "Lift upon us the light of thy countenance," also carries us back to a similar one in the Pentateuch. But if we take this exposition by itself, and to the exclusion of the other, there is something hard in it, since the "alone," and the "in safety," are placed beside each other, and with so little connection. This difficulty vanishes, if, uniting both expositions together, we suppose that the Psalmist had in view a sort of double sense: Thou, O Lord, makest me alone dwell in safety; for thou only, O Lord, (comp. Deut. xxxiii. 12,) makest me dwell alone and in safety. The expression, "Thou makest me *dwell*," by its peculiarity, begets the suspicion of there being some original passage previously existing, from which it is taken, and in Lev. xxv. 18, 19, we find the words, "Ye shall do my statutes and keep my judgments, and *ye shall dwell in the land in safety;* and the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and *dwell therein in safety.*" With right does the Psalmist appropriate to himself the promises which originally referred to Israel. What is true of the whole is true also of the individual, in whom the idea of the whole is become vividly realized; so that we may again ascend from the individual to the whole.

PSALM V.

We make our commencement here with an explanation of אֶל הַנְּחִילוֹת in the superscription. This has received a threefold exposition. 1. According to the Chaldee and the greater number of modern expositors, these words denote the *instruments*, with the accompaniment of which the Psalm was to be publicly brought out; נְחִילָה must be of like signification with חָלִיל, flute, to which it is supposed to be related. But to this it is objected, that not a trace of connection is any where else to be found between the two roots; farther, that the instruments are never in the superscriptions introduced with אֶל; finally, that the flute, although it is named among the instruments of the prophetic schools in 1 Sam. x. 5, was yet never used as a component part of the sacred temple music; and, in particular, never as one of the instruments with which the singing of the Psalms was accompanied. For the most part, it is only stringed instruments that are spoken of in this latter respect, comp., be-

sides the superscriptions, Psalm xcii. 3; xlix. 4; cl.; the trumpets, which were used only in the songs of praise at the solemn feasts, are mentioned in Psalms xlvii. 5; lxxxi. 3; xcviii. 6; cl.; but the flute is never named, not even among the instruments of Psalm cl. 2. Others suppose, that the words point to another Psalm, after the air of which this Psalm was to be sung, so Abenezra, Hitzig: "After the inheritance." But a careful examination of the superscriptions establishes the result, that they do not afford one undoubted example of this sort, and it would require an extreme necessity to shut us up here to a supposition, which is so devoid of all certain analogy. 3. Others suppose that the words mark the object of the Psalm. So all the Greek translators, who render the words: ὑπὲρ τῆς κληρονομούσης, "upon the heiress;" the Vulgate: Super ea, quae haereditatem consequitur; and Luther: for the inheritance, which he thus explains, "According to the title, this is the common purport of the Psalm, that it asks for the inheritance of God, desiring that the people of God may be kept and preserved for their Lord." It is a general confirmation of this view, that, in by far the most dark and difficult superscriptions, the words are found, on close investigation, to give a kind of enigmatical description of the contents and object of the Psalms, of which David, in particular, was fond. It is a special reason for this signification, that in the only other place where אֶל occurs in a superscription, it, in like manner, introduces the object. This exposition is therefore to be preferred, provided the word נְחִילוֹת admits of a sense which can serve as a suitable designation of the object of the Psalm. נָחַל signifies, to *inherit, possess;* the feminine of the adjective with a passive signification can, therefore, only mean the *inherited,* the *possessed;* in plural, the *possessions,* the *lots,* —comp. Job vii. 3. Now, the whole Psalm is taken up with a double destiny, that of the righteous, and that of the wicked—the blessing which is appointed by God to the former, and the misery to the latter; and in case of a single word being employed to describe the contents, none more suitable could be found than that here used, "upon the lots."

After an introduction in ver. 1 and 2, in which the Psalmist intreats the Lord that he would hear his prayer, the prayer itself follows in two strophes of equal length, each consisting of five verses, ver. 3—7, and ver. 8—12, which run parallel in point of matter, both treating of the same subject, and doing so

in corresponding parts. In the first strophe, the Psalmist prays the Lord, that as he made haste to pray to him—being his first business in the morning—so the Lord might hasten to help him against his enemies, ver. 3; ver. 4—6 grounds this prayer upon the circumstance, that God, as holy and righteous, hates sin and sinners, and dooms them to destruction; and in ver. 7, the hope and confidence is expressed, that he, the righteous, delivered through God's grace, will give thanks to him in his temple. The second strophe, like the second table of the prayer, which, as in the Decalogue, is comprised in the number ten, begins anew in ver. 8, with a supplication for the Psalmist's deliverance in his conflict with the adversaries; then follows in ver. 9, 10, the ground of it, pointing to the sinfulness of the adversaries, which, in a manner, called for God's judgments on them, and bringing them to destruction; and the conclusion here again, ver. 11, 12, contains an expression of joyful hope for the righteous, as those whom God cannot fail to bless.—The only disagreement in point of form is, that in the first strophe, the grounding of the prayer, and the delineation there given of the condition of the wicked, three verses are taken up, in the second only two, while the hope and the representation of the state of the righteous occupies but one verse in the first strophe, and in the second, two verses. As it is the peculiar aim of the Psalm to elevate the hope of the righteous, it is quite natural that the writer should close with a fuller expression of this.

Venema justly describes the Psalm as "a distinguished testimony of Divine righteousness and mercy, in defending and blessing the righteous, and in excluding the wicked from his fellowship, driving them away, and destroying them." But he errs in thinking that these truths are delivered by him, quite in a general way, without any subjective demonstration, without any actual oppression of the righteous, by the wicked giving occasion to the unfolding of these truths,—a supposition in which he was already preceded by Luther, who says: "It is certain that this Psalm does not treat of external suffering and opposition, for not a word in the whole Psalm makes mention of that; but all the complaint is directed against the wicked, the ungodly, and workers of iniquity. Hence it appears to me, that the leading object and characteristic of this Psalm is, that in it the Psalmist prays against hypocrites, against seductive workers of righteousness, and false prophets, who mislead the people of God, and

the heritage of Christ, with their human satisfactions." That the historical ground consisted in the oppression of enemies, appears from the mention of these in ver. 8, from the "for" in ver. 4, and the same in ver. 9. When the Psalmist grounds his prayer for acceptance and blessing on the reprobation of the wicked, it is pre-supposed that the wicked were his enemies. He does not say, as he should have done, according to that hypothesis, bless the righteous, destroy the wicked; but he says, discomfit the wicked because of their wickedness, and *thereby* deliver the righteous. What has misled men into that hypothesis, and given it probability, is the Psalmist's here specially bringing out, as a ground of hope for the righteous, that his enemies in general are wicked, while elsewhere, the evil which they actually *as enemies* commit, is particularly declared—*there* it is: deliver me from mine enemies, for they wrong me; *here:* deliver me from them, for they are evil, but I am righteous, and thou canst not but, according to thy nature, destroy the wicked, and bless the righteous. The authors of the Psalms divide the treasure of consolation, which God has given them as householders, into particular gifts, and sometimes they exhibit this, sometimes that particular. Here, for example, the particular point brought into notice is, that the enemies of the Psalmist are, at the same time, rebels against God, to whom he cannot accord the victory, without denying himself, while the Psalmist, on the other hand, was a righteous man,—that it was impossible God could interchange them with each other, or confuse the unalterably fixed, and perpetually separated lots of the righteous and the wicked; while in Ps. vi. the ground of hope is derived from the extremely mournful position in which the Psalmist was placed by means of his enemies. To express it shortly, the Psalmist comforts the suffering righteous, by pointing to the unchangeable Divine righteousness, which will see to it that the righteous and the wicked shall each keep their respective lots. He assures himself, that his deliverance from the hand of the wicked is as undoubtedly certain, as that God cannot deny and forget himself.

The superscription ascribes the Psalm to David, and that no exception can be taken against this from ver. 7, where the house and temple of the Lord are spoken of, we shall show on that verse. What Hitzig has advanced against its Davidic authorship, viz., the slow motion and differences of expression, is only,

in so far as it is well grounded, of force against those who suppose a particular occasion. The racy style and liveliness of feeling which we generally perceive in those Psalms of David, which originated in particular occasions, we certainly do not find here.

Various defenders of the Davidic authorship have tried to discover some such particular occasion here, for the most part in the revolt of Absalom,—but the endeavour has been found to be quite fruitless. Ver. 7, which might be connected with 2 Sam. xv. 25, is altogether general in its subject, and contains only such matter as every righteous man might utter. Not a single trace is to be found in the whole Psalm, of any particular reference. And for the main subject, that the Psalmist speaks, not in his own person, but in that of the righteous, puts words into his mouth, which he is to use in times of oppression, is clear from ver. 11 and 12, where, at the close, the *I* is supplanted by those who "trust in the Lord," "who love his name," "the righteous." The Psalm is, therefore, in the most proper sense, a didactic one.

This Psalm probably owes its place here, to the circumstance of its being designed for a morning prayer, ver. 3. On this account it appears very appropriate to come after Psalm iii. and iv. which are evening prayers.

The significant part, which the *numerals* play in our Psalm, is worthy of remark. The three which the Israelites accounted peculiarly important and sacred, are found in it. The whole Psalm contains twelve verses, its proper building without the ante-chamber, ten, the delineation of the malice of the wicked, twice over, makes up the number seven.

Ver. 1. *Give ear to my words, O Lord, understand my meditation.* הגיגי, which, excepting this passage, occurs only in Psalm xxxix. 3, is to be derived from the verb הגג, which is of the same import as הגה. There is no reason for renouncing here, the common signification of *considering*, which is also quite suitable in Ps. xxxix.; indeed, the context favours this. David puts first the general expression "my words." This he now divides into two parts, the low and the loud, the silent complaint of the heart, the unutterable sigh, which is understood by him who searches the heart, of which Paul also speaks in Romans viii. 26, 27, and the loud cry of the distressed soul for help, in the following verses. בין is not to be taken with Luther, and most

modern expositors, in the sense of *marking, considering*, which the verb never has, when construed with the accusative, but in the sense of *understanding* or *perceiving*, which also, as Muis has remarked, agrees best with the noun *meditation*.

Ver. 2. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my king and my God!* This address proclaims the ground of the Psalmist's, or the righteous man's justification in desiring help, and of his hope in regard to it. God is named king here, not on account of his resistless sovereignty over the whole earth, but on account of his special relation to Israel. As king, God cannot permit evil to triumph in his kingdom, and he cannot but defend him, who, as righteous, can address him as *his* king. Hence, this address contains a frank recognition of God's *obligation* to help, springing from faith, which carries with it, at the same time, an admonition to the Psalmist to confide in his help. Another recognition lies in the words, *for unto thee will I pray*,—where the *for* refers to the preceding imperative. David, as Calvin remarks, "sets out with the general principle, that those who call on God in their necessities, are never cast off by him. He places himself in opposition to the *unbelieving*, who in misfortune, neglecting God, either consume their grief within themselves, or make complaints of it to men, as if God took no cognizance of them.

Ver. 3. *My voice mayest thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I set in order my prayer to thee, and look out.* Just as formerly, the Psalmist had entreated the Lord generally for the exercise of his help, so now he desires him to make haste to perform the same. It is, says he, so soon as I awake, my first day's work to flee to thee, do thou, therefore, hasten also to help me. Comp. in Ps. cxliii. 8, "cause me to hear thy voice in the morning," with that in ver. 7, "hear me speedily." That תִּשְׁמַע is to be taken optat., and is not, with Hitzig, to be translated *thou hearest*, is clear from the analogy of the corresponding verse just referred to, where the imperative is found, as also from the words, *I look out*, which, as to matter, equally express the language of prayer. עָרַךְ, *to set in order*, is used of arranging the wood upon the altar in Gen. xxii. 9, Lev. i. 6, 1 Kings xviii. 33, the bread upon the sacred table, Lev. xxiv. 8, comp. Ex. xl. 23, Lev. xxiv. 6. The matter, which is here set in order, are the words of his prayer; his setting these in order, however, is not simply his directing them to

God; but the prayer, probably with a particular reference to the shew-bread, is described as a spiritual oblation, which the Psalmist presents to the Lord with the break of day. *And then I will look out.* צפה, speculari, namely, whether the answer, the help, approached. The Psalmist, having done his own part, now confidently expects that God also will do his. The image is taken from those who, when oppressed by an enemy, look out from a high watch-tower, whether help is at hand. Comp. Hab. ii. 1, where the same image is more fully expressed. Micah vii. 7, "Therefore I will look unto the Lord (rather, I will look out in the Lord), I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." The Berleb. Bible: "One must keep on the watch, if one would receive any thing from God, and wait with longing for the desired answer, also be constantly looking about for help, and giving heed to whatsoever the Lord may speak." This verse shows that the Psalm is a morning prayer, just as the two preceding Psalms contained prayers for the evening. That the pious in Israel prayed at the same three periods, which the Christian church has also consecrated to prayer, appears from Ps. lv. 17, "Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice." Of the morning prayer alone is mention made in Ps. lxxxviii. 13, "But unto thee have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee."

Ver. 4. *For thou art no God whom wickedness pleases, dwells not with thee the wicked.* The *for*, which connects ver. 4—6 with ver. 3, is only satisfactorily explained, when his deliverance from his enemies is considered as the object, though not expressly named, of the Psalmist's prayer, and of his earnest expectation: hear my prayer for deliverance from mine enemies, for thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, &c. But mine enemies are wicked, therefore thou must subdue them and deliver me. Upon the number seven in the description of wickedness, Luther has remarked: "With seven words does the prophet accuse the ungodly preachers and their disciples, those who seek holiness by works." It is the less likely to have been an accident, as the number seven occurs again in ver. 9 and 10. יגורך is not to be regarded, with many expositors, as standing for ינור עמך, nor is the accusat. to be explained, with Ewald, by saying, that to *dwell with* is here put for *to be confidential*, to know any one as a friend; for in other passages, such as Ps. cxx.

5, where the verb is in like manner joined with the accus., this modification of meaning is inadmissible. There it is used of such as dwell with any one by constraint, and unwillingly. The construction is rather to be explained in this way, that the person is considered as comprehending its property in itself: "to inhabit the Lord," for, "to inhabit the house of the Lord." This supposition is strongly confirmed by the fact that גור באהל יהוה, to dwell in the tabernacle of the Lord, to inhabit the Lord, by which we explain גור יהוה here is very commonly used to denote a near relation to the Lord, and his protection, comp. for example, Ps. xv. 1, lxi. 4. The representation is derived from one's receiving a pilgrim, גֵּר, hospitably into his dwelling. Whosoever is received to such honour by God, he must take care not to pollute his pure dwelling with unrighteousness. He must be holy, even as God is holy.

Ver. 5. *The proud treads not before thine eyes, thou hatest all workers of iniquity.* They must not stand under his eyes, a mark of the deepest abhorrence, taken from earthly kings, near whom none are allowed to come excepting those who enjoy their favour. De Wette falsely: they cannot bear thy presence on account of their evil conscience, instead of: thou wilt not bear their presence on account of thy holiness. Hab. i. 13, is parallel "thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity; wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, &c." הוֹלְלִים, *proud*, from הָלַל, *to shine*, then to be proud, in Hithp. *to boast*. From the parallelism here and in other passages with "evil-doers," and "ungodly," some would have the conclusion drawn for a general signification of the word. But this is to be admitted only in so far as high-mindedness, together with covetousness and lust, is considered in Scripture as one of the main roots of all sinful corruption, so that every proud and lofty one is, at the same time, an ungodly person, and a worker of iniquity. In regard to the object aimed at by this representation of the hatred of God toward the workers of iniquity, Calvin remarks: "It is an excellent conclusion: God hates unrighteousness, therefore he will take righteous vengeance on all unrighteous persons."

Ver. 6. *Thou destroyest them that speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloody and deceitful man.* Berleb. Bible: "In us are selfish and vain thoughts, which, as liars, only seek after vanity,

and would fill our souls therewith; but these, Lord, thou wilt bring down by the sword and word of thy mouth, and root out all falsehood in us."

Ver. 7. *And I, through thy great favour, will come into thy house, to worship in thy fear toward thy holy temple.* In the words *and I*, a contrast is presented to the enemies who are doomed to destruction. So also these, *in the greatness of thy favour*, stand in opposition to the Lord's abhorrence of sinners expressed in the preceding verse, coupled with a reference to the greatness of the distress, which, irremediable by *human* means, called for a singular manifestation of Divine help. While mine enemies, whom the Lord abhors, are put down, I, whom he loves as his pious worshipper, will come, not through mine own power, but through the greatness of his favour, &c. This contrast, in regard to the Lord's abhorrence of the ungodly, of itself shows how falsely some expound: "In the greatness of my love towards thee." This exposition has not the slightest support from the *usus loquendi*. חסד יהוה is never love *to* God, but always the grace or favour of God towards his people. It is also opposed by Ps. lxix. 13, 16, where "the multitude of God's tender mercies" is celebrated as the cause of deliverance.

The coming into the house of God and worshipping toward his holy temple is mentioned here only in respect to its occasion, and is to be considered simply as it had for its aim the giving thanks to God for his deliverance, and pre-supposes this. Comp. Ps. lxvi. 13, "I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings, I will pay thee my vows." *In thy fear* corresponds to *in the greatness of thy favour*. The fear of God, a reverent regard to him, is the fruit of the manifestation of his fulness of love, of the display of his glory in the Psalmist's deliverance. As the product of God's manifestations, fear is not unfrequently named, for example, Gen. xxviii. 17, where, after one of God's richest manifestations of grace had been noticed, it is said, "Jacob was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place;" also Hab. iii. 1, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, (lit. the report, viz., of thy glorious deeds in behalf of thy people,) and was afraid." Completely mistaken is the sense which De Wette and others give to this verse, understanding it thus: "The Psalmist pronounces himself blessed in opposition to the ungodly, in that he belongs to those who can approach God; he seeks for his tem-

ple and serves him. But it is of God's great mercy, that he is to do this. Against such a view it might be enough to compare this verse with the corresponding 11th, which, like this, declares, according to our exposition, the hope of deliverance. The contrast, which is manifestly drawn against the miserable lot that is prepared by God for the wicked, v. 4—6, requires, that here the happy condition of the righteous should be described. Access to the outward sanctuary stood open also to the ungodly, and, to bring one thither, the multitude of God's mercy was not needed. The singular manifestation of his goodness here spoken of, as opposed to his annihilating horror of the wicked, can only be regarded as that exercise of gracious power which delivers the righteous. The expression "in thy fear," is, according to the view in question, torn away from its connection with his coming "in the greatness of God's favour." And in regard to the subject-matter, it gives to the first strophe, which is manifestly closed, an unsatisfactory conclusion. The Psalmist had begun with a prayer for help and deliverance, and this grounded upon God's abhorrence of sin, in consequence of which he cannot but destroy the wicked, his enemies. The only conclusion we could expect, is the hope and confidence of help. But instead of this the Psalmist is made to speak of his happiness in being able to get to the temple of the Lord,—how we are not told; and upon the result of his prayer we learn absolutely nothing. The expression is not, as many expositors take it, *in*, but "*to* thy holy temple." The interior of the temple David was not allowed to enter. But he would, according to the custom of the worship then established, turn himself in the time of prayer to the place where the gracious presence of the Lord had its seat, from whence also his aid had come. הֵיכַל יְהוָה was the dwelling-place of the Lord, not so named as being a great building, but from being his residence as king of Israel. The house, where a king or prince dwells, is a palace, whether it be splendid or not. Hence the tabernacle bore this name equally with the temple. Of the former it is used in 1 Sam. i. 9, iii. 3: "And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was,"—passages which, with perfect arbitrariness, (for there is no reason to consider הֵיכַל as exclusively used for designating the temple,) men have sought to get rid of by the remark, that the author unconsciously carries back to an antecedent period, a word of later origin. But an

incontestible proof, that the word was applied also to the tabernacle, is furnished by Ps. xxvii. From that word occurring in v. 4, De Wette concludes the Psalm not to be one of David's. But he has overlooked the circumstance, that in v. 6 of the same Psalm, the Psalmist vows to bring an offering to God into the tabernacle or tent-temple. It is undeniable, therefore, that at a time when the temple was still unbuilt, the holy tent was named היכל; first the old Mosaic tabernacle, then the tent, which David erected over the ark of the covenant on Mount Zion. It is besides false to maintain, as is very frequently done, that the word denotes the holy, in opposition to the most holy place. In regard to this, nothing can be concluded from the passage before us, since the person praying could only so far direct himself to the hekal, as the Lord was throned there—comp. Ps. xxviii. 2, where David stretches out his hands to the holiest of all—nor from 1 Sam. iii. 3, where the lamp belonging to the sanctuary is represented as being found in the hekal. The right view is, that hekal denotes the holy, and the most holy place together—the temple in the strictest sense, as opposed to the outer court. Only in one passage, 1 Kings vi. 5, it is used specially to denote the sanctuary, where it is limited by being expressly distinguished from the most holy place, a relation similar to that of Israel and Judah, Judah and Jerusalem,—so that we cannot properly say, that hekal of itself denotes the holy place, for the more limited idea is only conveyed by the context.

Ver. 8. The Psalmist makes here, as it were, a new onset. Just as upon his prayer joyful hope had followed, so here out of his hope a new prayer comes forth, to which new confidence attaches. The matter from v. 8—12 runs parallel with v. 3—7, first a prayer, then its ground, and lastly, a hope.—*Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies; make thy way smooth before my face.* The Psalmist prays the Lord, that he would display his righteousness in his dealings, and bring salvation to his servant. A great many expositors, of more recent ones, De Wette, Ewald, Hitzig, Maurer, understand by *thy righteousness*, that which thou requirest, which is well-pleasing to thee. The words, "because of mine enemies," *i.e.* from regard to them, that they may not triumph over me, if I should make a false step; "make straight thy way before me," direct me into the course of action, which thou lovest. But the whole of this interpretation is certainly erroneous. The right-

eousness here spoken of is the property of God, according to which he gives to every one his own—befriends the pious, who confide in his promises, and destroys the ungodly. This is evident from the *for* in the next verse, which assigns the reason. How little this accords with the first exposition may appear from the remark of De Wette in the earlier editions of his Com.: "כי dropt out in the translation, is not here a proper logical *for*, and is often used as an expletive;" and also from this, that in the fourth edit., while he makes v. 9 to assign the ground, on account of which God should uphold him in righteousness, and sustain him before his enemies, he feels himself obliged to supply the rejected word, though his exposition of the preceding verse does not justify him in doing so. The meaning is: because mine enemies are so godless, but my cause and object are righteous, thy righteousness renders it necessary that thou shouldst guide me, as I can find no other resource,—shouldst make plain to me thy way, the path, by which thou leadest me, and remove the mountains of difficulty which thou hast now thrown in the way. This view is confirmed as the right one, by a comparison with v. 5, where David grounds his prayer for help in the same manner, and also with v. 12, where it is said, "Thou, O Lord, blessest the righteous." It is a farther confirmation, that this view alone brings the prayer here into a proper relation to the hope in v. 11, which respects not a moral keeping, but salvation and blessing. Then, no other interpretation can fitly connect our verse with v. 7, where not spiritual support, but deliverance is hoped for—and in particular, the words "in thy righteousness," with "the greatness of my favour." Finally, our interpretation is borne out by a great number of parallel passages in the Psalms, the meaning of which has in no small degree been perverted, for example, Ps. xxiii. 3, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness;" Ps. xxv. 5, 6, "Show me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths; lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation;" Ps. xxvii. 11, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." The expression "in thy righteousness," is, according both to the parallelism and the parallel passages, to be thus explained, that the righteousness of God is represented as the way, by which the Psalmist desires to be led, of which nothing else is said, than that it must develope itself in what befel him. When the Psalmist pleads, "because of his enemies," it shows how much, being surrounded

by powerful adversaries, he stood in need of help. Through the whole he has only to do with Divine aid against his enemies.

In the word הוּשַׁר there is joined a double form of reading. The consonants belong to that of the text, which must be pronounced הוֹשַׁר, the vowels to that of the gloss הַיְשַׁר. Both forms are the imperative in Hiph. of the verb ישׁר, to be straight. The form of the text is here, as always, to be preferred, for in Hiph. the original verbs פי almost constantly borrow their forms from the פו, comp. Ewald, p. 393. The Masorites have here, as very often, only substituted the grammatical regularity, to which they were also particularly led by a reference to Prov. iv. 25, where the form הַיְשַׁר is actually found. Just as in our text they satisfied their love for regularity and uniformity by substituting הַיְשַׁר for הוֹשַׁר, so in Isa. xlv. 2, for the same reason, they placed the Piel in the Kri instead of the Hiph. of the text.

Ver. 9. *For there is no uprightness in his mouth, their inward part is wickedness, their throat is an open sepulchre, they make smooth their tongue.* We remarked already, that here also the representation of the wickedness of the enemies is completed in the number seven. The four points contained in our verse are obvious, and to these must be added those in ver. 10 —their destructive counsels, the fulness of their transgressions, their rebellion against God. Our verse corresponds exactly to the 4th and 5th verses, and ver. 10 to the 7th. In both places, the seven fall into four and three. The *for* marks what is contained in ver. 9 and 10, as laying the ground of what has been said in ver. 8. God must accept the Psalmist, and grant him deliverance, *for* his enemies are in the highest degree corrupt, are rebels against God, whom he, as the Holy One, cannot but discomfit. The suffixes of the verbs refer to the adversaries in ver. 8. The use of the singular suffix at the first, is to be explained by the entire mass of enemies being represented by the Psalmist as one person, as a personified ungodliness. The enemies are only *numerically* different; in respect to wickedness, there is no distinction among them. They are as a head with many members. "There is no uprightness in his mouth." They speak nothing but faithless deceit and lies. Comp. Ps. lxii. 4, "They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly." "Their inward part" is expounded by many as precisely the same with "their soul." But this does not agree with the structure of the verse,

which always puts the bodily part that corresponds to the spiritual. So that here also, the *inward* denotes what stands opposed to the *outward*—the *mouth* as the organ of *words*—the *heart* as the seat of *feelings*, as we too speak of the heart in the body. הַוָּוֹת from הוה=היה, to be, properly accident, casus, then in a bad sense, an ill accident, misfortune, evil, and not simply such as one *suffers*, but, as here, such also as one *brings*, hurt, wickedness. "Their heart is wickedness," very expressive, it has so completely taken possession of their hearts, that there is no distinction between them. The *throat* must here, according to several, stand as the organ of swallowing, marking the enemies as taken with an insatiable thirst for destruction. So Calvin: "He compares them to graves, as if he would say, They are all-devouring abysses, denoting thereby, their insatiable thirst for the enjoyment of blood." But the throat is commonly used as an organ of *speech*, comp. Psalms cxlix. 6, cxv. 7, &c.; and that it must here also be regarded as the same, appears from the connection in which it stands with the mouth as an instrument of speech, with the heart as the source of speech, and with the tongue. The point of comparison between their throat and an open grave, lies in the proneness and tendency to destruction. Their speech was preparing for them the destruction which was at hand.—*They make smooth* (Eng. ver., flatter with) *their tongues*, speak smoothly and hypocritically. Venema: "They pretend love to God and man, that they may the more easily impose on the credulous, and overwhelm them." Falsely many: *with* the tongue. לְשׁוֹנָם is accusative, governed by the verb יַחֲלִיקוּן, which in Hiph. is always transitive, and in connection with the accusative. "The tongue," or "the words," as in Prov. ii. 16, vii. 5, indicate flattering."

Ver. 10. This verse, as to its matter, continues the grounding of the Psalmist's prayer for deliverance, on the corruptness of his enemies, which, from the Divine righteousness, would necessitate their destruction. But in place of: Thou must or wilt hold them guilty on account of their counsels, &c., the imperative is introduced for liveliness of effect: Hold them guilty, &c. *Hold them guilty, O God; let them fall on account of their counsels; on account of the multitude of their crimes, overthrow them, for they have rebelled against thee.* אָשַׁם signifies in Kal, *to be guilty*, hence, in Hiph. in which it occurs only here, *to make* or

hold guilty. It is wrong to say, that the word in Hiph. means precisely to *punish.* It is perfectly sufficient for the sense, that it mean to make guilty, and exhibit as guilty, in so far as the guilty is thereby brought out before the eyes of men, in his real character—comp., for example, Psalm xxxiv. 21, "Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be guilty." Michaelis: Reos eos pronuntia, ut qui multis modis rei sunt. Luther: "The word properly signifies such a decision and judgment, as would show and manifest what sort of neighbours they are, when their ungodly dispositions are disclosed, and every one is made known." In the expression יפלו ממעצותיהם the preposition is best taken as the causal מ, comp. Hos. xi. 6, where the same compound is used in the same sense; on account, because, of their counsels. This exposition is confirmed by the analogy of the following clause, "Because of the multitude of their enemies," and also, "*For* they have rebelled against thee." Only when thus understood, can the clause fall into the circle of the number seven. The cause of their perdition, and of the Psalmist's deliverance from them, is, that their mouth is without uprightness, &c. These grounds decide against other expositions. Not a few, following in the footsteps of Luther—that they fall from their own plans:—*let them fall, perish from their counsels,* i.e., without their being able to execute them. Others: "Let their counsels become vain," נפל מן like the Latin spe excidere, ausis excidere. But against this, it is to be urged, that no example can be produced of this signification. Then there is the parallel "overthrow them," which shows, that the verb must here be taken in its proper sense. Comp. Psalm xxxvi. 12, "There are the workers of iniquity fallen, they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise;" Psalm cxli. 10. Still others: Let them fall by their counsels, or through them.—*On account of,* prop. *in the multitude of.* The effect rests in its cause. *For against thee have they rebelled.* The verbs, which express an effect, and so in particular those, which mark a hostile feeling, are commonly connected with the object to which the effect adheres, by the prep. ב. Since the Psalm, as already shown, refers not specially to David, but to the righteous generally, we must not expound: For not against me, but against thee have they rebelled, but the opposition is of enmity toward men, and rebellion against God. The Psalmist's enemies must sustain a defeat, for they are rebels

against God, whose sacred rights they would trample under foot. God would therefore not be God, if he should suffer them to go unpunished. The wishes of the Psalmist are at the same time so many predictions, for he prays only for that which God, on the supposition that his enemies do not change—that is expressly noticed in Psalm vii. 12, and is generally to be supposed in such cases—must, according to his nature, necessarily do; the request, *hold them guilty*, has this for its ground and justification: Thou must hold them guilty. For what God does, and must do, that man not merely *may*, but *must* wish. So already August. Sermo. 22 ad Script.: "The Prophet speaks in the form of a wish, concerning what he certainly foresees would no otherwise take place, as appears to me, showing how we must not be dissatisfied with the known determinations of God, which he has firmly and unalterably fixed." Of a thirst for revenge, there can be no question in cases like the preceding; it is not against personal enemies as such, but only against enemies of God, that the Psalmist pretends to give judgment.

Ver. 11. *And all those that put their trust in thee shall rejoice, they shall for ever shout for joy, and thou wilt protect them, and in thee shall they be joyful who love thy name.* The *and* connects this with the announcement indirectly contained in the preceding context, of the overthrow of the wicked. That the futures of the verbs are not, with Luther and others, to be taken optatively, (let them rejoice, &c.) but in the sense of the future, expressing not a prayer, but a hope, is clear from the analogy of the corresponding eight verbs. That those who trust upon the Lord, are not, with most expositors, to be considered such as are different from the Psalmist, rejoicing at the deliverance granted to him, but rather as those very persons who have participated in the deliverance,—that the gladness and rejoicing here, comes into consideration only as respects its object and occasion: they shall rejoice, &c.; as if he had said: thou wilt, through thy salvation, afford them cause for joy,—this appears, 1. From the analogy of ver. 7, where, in like manner, the hope of salvation is indirectly declared, for the joy and rejoicing here correspond to the coming into the temple there. 2. From the circumstance, that if the discourse had been of others, who should be glad at the deliverance of the Psalmist, this object of their delight would probably have been more minutely described. 3. From the words "they shall *for ever* shout for

joy," which, as the perpetual continuance could not possibly be ascribed to the rejoicing of others for the deliverance of the Psalmist, necessarily implies, that the persons rejoicing are the same as delivered, and that the rejoicing is spoken of only as the consequence of the deliverance: thou wilt give them perpetual cause for rejoicing. 4. From the consideration, that "they shall rejoice," "they shall shout for joy," "they shall be joyful," stand entirely on a par with "and thou wilt protect them,"—which the defenders of the exposition we oppose, in vain strive to separate from the preceding and succeeding context, rendering: since thou protectest them, or whom thou protectest. 5. And finally, our view is confirmed by the entirely general character of the Psalm, so that it cannot appear strange, if, at the close, the plurality concealed in unity, should manifestly discover itself, and the righteous at large, should be substituted in the place of the righteous individual. The meaning, therefore, is simply this: while the impious rebels are brought into subjection, salvation is experienced by the pious.—Upon חוסי־בך, comp. on Ps. ii. 12. The former is the full pausal form, Ewald, p. 137. תסך is fut. in Hiph. from סכך to cover, with על to cover upon, to protect.—*Those that love thy name.* The *name* of God never stands in the Old Testament as a mere designation, but always emphatically, as an expression of his nature. Hence, "to love the name of the Lord," is as much as to "love him," so far as he has manifested his nature. If God were nameless, he could not be the object of love; for then he could not manifest himself, as the name is the necessary product of the manifestation, *that* by which society gathers up the impression which it has received through the manifestation, so that the name is commonly used only for the purpose of renewing the impression.

Ver. 12. The Psalmist here expresses the foundation of his hope, as declared in the preceding context. The pious shall have occasion to rejoice, on account of the salvation of God, *for* it is God's way, founded upon his nature, to bless the righteous, or him who trusts in God, and loves his name. *For thou blessest the righteous, O Lord, with favour thou compassest him about as with a shield.* The fut. is used in the sense of *must.* Hope in regard to that which the Lord will do, is then only a well-founded one, when it proceeds upon what he constantly does. The צנה, is prop. to be rendered: as a shield, *i.e.* covers.

The comparison is often not fully expressed, when the mere indication will suffice, for example, Is. i. 25, "I will cleanse thy dross, as soap," that is, as soap cleanses, comp. Ew. p. 614. It is just as improper, as if a ב were supplied, to maintain, that צנה stands in the accus. governed by the verb. (De Wette). Then the shield would be not the covering, but the covered. תעטרנו is fut. in Kal. To take it as fut. in Hiph. with Rosenmüller, is without support. The Hiph is never used in the sense of *covering*, or *crowning*, but only in a single place, Isa. xxiii. 8, as Denom. from עטרה, a *crown*, in the sense of "distributing crowns." Luther is not exactly right in rendering: Thou crownest him with favour. The signification of crowning does not belong to the Kal, but only to the Piel.

PSALM VI.

Surrounded by enemies, the Psalmist flees to God for help, ver. 1—7. He receives from God the assurance, that he is heard, and calls upon his enemies to desist from their projects, since the Lord has vouchsafed to him support, ver. 8—10. The two main divisions here marked, are very obvious. Koester divides the first into three strophes, 1—3, 5 and 6, 7 and 8; so that the measure would be 3. 2. 2. 3. But it is better to divide the Psalm into clear strophes of two verses, with a beginning and concluding verse. Then the strophical arrangement exactly agrees with the sections as to meaning. In ver. 2 and 3 the Psalmist grounds his prayer for deliverance on this, that through suffering he has become quite exhausted, faint in body and soul, —rising in 4 and 5 so far as to declare, that he had come nigh to death, and was consequently in danger of losing his highest good, that of being able to praise God, which God in his mercy could not take from him. In ver. 6 and 7, he justifies his affirmation, that he had reached the precincts of the dead: consuming grief for all the malice of his enemies has drunk up his springs of life. Ver. 8 and 9 form the strophe of his acceptance and confidence. The first and last verses contain the quintessence of the whole, ver. 2—7 being just a farther expansion of ver. 1, and ver. 10 drawing out the result of ver. 8 and 9. If we bring ver. 1 and 10 together, we have the Psalm in nuce.

Traces of a more formal arrangement may be perceived, besides this strophe-division. The Psalm has its course in the number ten; it contains, as it were, a decalogue for those who are sadly oppressed by their enemies. Farther, we cannot look upon it as accidental, that, in accordance with the superscription *upon the eight*, the name of God occurs in it precisely eight times. The fact, also, that in the first part the name of God is found just five times, cannot be overlooked, when viewed in connection with the whole number of verses, ten. It would seem that the author wished in this way to mark the first part as the one half of his decalogue. See on the five, as the broken, half-completed number, Baehr Symbolik Th. I. p. 183. The repetition thrice of the name of God, in the second part, makes one just the more inclined to perceive a reference to the thrice repeated name of God in the Mosaic blessing, the experience of which in himself the Psalmist here triumphantly announces, as in Psalm iv. 7, and elsewhere frequently in the Psalms, there is a distinct verbal allusion to the same.

The superscription ascribes the Psalm to David, and there is certainly nothing to throw a doubt upon this testimony. What makes David so great—the deep feeling of his sins, and his unworthiness before God, united with firm confidence that God will not withdraw his favour from those who implore it with a broken heart—is all uttered here. Hitzig, indeed, maintains that the Psalmist exhibits a different character from that of David,—a desponding spirit, which permits itself to be easily dismayed,—a weak, languishing heart, certainly not that of a warrior; David did not carry himself so unmanfully when in danger of death, but always discovered a lively confidence in God, which is awanting here. To begin at the last point, that the Psalmist does not abandon himself to a comfortless despair, but has a lively confidence in God, is evident from his addressing a prayer full of expectation for help from the Lord. But if any one might overlook this in the prayer, he cannot fail to perceive it in the second part, which breathes nothing but triumphant confidence. That in David, however, when heavily oppressed with suffering, the *natural* man sunk not less than with the Psalmist here, is capable of abundant proof from his history. According to 1 Sam. xxx. 6, "David was greatly distressed, but he encouraged himself in the Lord his God." According to 2 Sam. xii. 16, sq. he fasted and wept for seven long days, after

the prophet announced to him the death of his child. In 2 Sam. xv. 30, he is said to have "gone up to Mount Olivet weeping, and with his head covered," marks which are in ill agreement with the idea of a great man, as the world conceives of such. The whole argument proceeds upon the transference of this ideal to a quite foreign territory. That supposed greatness of soul which considers suffering as a plaything, upon which one should throw himself with manly courage, is not to be met with on the territory of Scripture; upon that everywhere appear faint, weak and dissolving hearts, finding their strength and consolation only in God. This circumstance arises from more than one cause. 1. Suffering has quite another aspect to the members of God's church than to the world. While the latter regard it only as the effect of accident, which one should meet with manly courage, the pious man recognises in every trial the visitation of an angry God, a chastisement for his sins. This is to him the real sting of the suffering, from which it derives its power to pierce into the marrow and bone. "Rightly to feel sin," says Luther, "is the torture of all tortures." He who considers sufferings in that light cannot without impiety attempt to cast it to the winds. He must regard it as his duty to allow it to go to his heart, and if this is not the case, even that must become again the object of his pungent sorrow. To make light of tribulations is all one, in the reckoning of Scripture, with making light of God. 2. The tenderer the heart, the deeper the pain. Living piety makes the heart soft and tender, refines all its sensibilities, and, consequently, takes away the power of resistance, which the world possesses, from the roughness of its heart. Many sources of pain are opened up in the Christian, which are closed in the ungodly. Love is much more deeply wounded by hatred, than hatred itself; righteousness sees wickedness in a quite different light from what wickedness itself does; a soft heart has goods to lose which a hard one never possessed. 3. The pious man has a friend in heaven, and on that account has no reason to be violently overcome by his sorrow. He permits the floods of this quietly to pass over him, gives nature its free, spontaneous course, knowing well, that beside the natural principle, there is another also existing in him, which always unfolds its energy the more, the more that the former has its rights reserved to it—that, according to the depths of the pain, is the height of the joy which is derived from God—

that every one is consoled after the measure in which he has borne suffering—that the meat never comes but from the eater, and honey from the terrible. On the contrary, whosoever lives in the world without God, he perceives that for him all is lost when he is lost himself. He girds himself up, gnashes at his pain, does violence to nature, seeks thereby to divert himself, and to gain from nature on the one side what it abstracts from him on the other, and thus he succeeds in obtaining the mastery over his pain, so long as God pleases. 4. The pious man has no reason to prevent himself and others from seeing into his heart. His strength is in God, and so he can lay open his weakness. The ungodly, on the other hand, consider it as a reproach to look upon themselves in their weakness, and to be looked upon by others in it. Even when smarting with pain inwardly, he feigns freedom from it, so long as he can.

What is the proper place of sufferings is manifest from the consequences to both classes. The pious man, while he regards all suffering as a punishment, takes that as the means of leading him to repentance, and derives from it the fruit of righteousness. He, on the other hand, who looks upon suffering merely as the sport of accident, thereby deprives himself of all blessing from it. And while, in this respect, he is not the better for his suffering, he is decidedly the worse in another. He, therefore, only throws himself on his own resources, only raises himself above his suffering, awakening as much as possible the fancy of his own worth, dignity, and excellence, and in the same proportion that he calls pride into exercise, his love decays—hardness becomes his inseparable companion. So that he in reality feeds upon his own fat, and quenches his thirst with his own heart's blood; and the question here also is applicable, "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" But suffering, when borne with faith, serves to free the heart of its natural hardness, to make it soft, and open it to love. Finally, it is possible, even at so dear a cost, to find consolation out of God only for smaller sufferings. While nothing can happen amiss to the righteous, however much may befal him of evil —for he strengthens himself in God, whose power is infinite—the man who trusts in himself bears up only so long as "fate," or in truth, He who sends the affliction, permits. Every moment he may be precipitated into the abyss of despair. He who never fainted, who used to mock at the faintings of believers, and to

speak in a contemptuous tone of the "plaintive Psalms," must then feel utterly undone. Human strength, and whatever besides he can summon to his aid, is still but a limited resource; it finds its proper antagonist only in what wounds the heel, and gives way when the resistance is too strong and violent to be contended with on feigned ground. Nothing is better fitted to show the insufficiency of all human power in the struggle against suffering, than the valuable confession of King Frederick II., who spared no cost to elevate this power, and whose great and mighty soul certainly did the utmost that can generally be accomplished in that field. He says, among other places in the Ep. to D'Alembert, sec. 12, p. 9: "It is unhappy, that all who suffer must flatly contradict Zeno, as there is none but will confess pain to be a great evil." P. 12: "It is noble to raise one's self above the disagreeable accidents to which we are exposed, and a moderate stoicism is the only means of consolation for the unfortunate. But whenever the stone, the gout, or the bull of Phalaris mix in the scene, the frightful shrieks which escape from the sufferers, leave no doubt that pain is a real evil." Again, p. 16: "When a misfortune presses us, which merely affects our person, self-love makes a point of honour to withstand vigorously this misfortune; but the moment we suffer an injury which is for ever irreparable, there is nothing left for us in Pandora's box which can bring us consolation, besides, perhaps, for a man of my advanced years, the strong conviction that I must soon be with those who have gone before me, (*i. e.* in the land of nothingness.) The heart is conscious of a wound, the Stoic freely confesses; I should feel no pain, but I do feel it against my will; it consumes, it lacerates me; an internal feeling overcomes my strength, and extorts from me complaints and fruitless groans."

We have not extended our remarks farther than the subject demands; for what Hitzig urges against this Psalm is just a particular shoot of that modern cast of thought, which is ever fretting against the tone of deep lamentation that pervades the Psalms. Hence it is proper to employ this opportunity in order, once for all, to cut up such objections by the root.

It is of importance for the exposition, to determine somewhat closely from the Psalm itself the situation in which the speaker was placed. From v. 7, and v. 8—10, it appears that he was sorely pressed with enemies. This serves of itself sufficiently to

manifest the untenable nature of that view, which represents the distress as standing in a mere corporeal illness. There are certainly passages, such as v. 2, which could not without the greatest violence be understood of any thing but of exhaustion of all bodily powers. But the whole becomes plain, whenever we view the position of the speaker thus: His distress proceeded at first from external enemies. But upon this arose another of a far heavier kind. He looked upon that outward distress as a punishment for his past sins, which now returned upon his soul with the weight of an oppressive load. He was involved in a severe conflict, which left even his body weak and impoverished. At length he gives wing to his oppressed soul in this supplication, and now succeeds to his deep notes of lamentation, the most triumphant tone of joy. Now he smiles at the outward distress, and in spirit sees his enemies already vanquished. De Wette and Hitzig, without the least ground for it, would give the Psalm a national reference, and suppose, that under the image of a suffering individual, is represented the Israelitish people in exile. Not the slightest trace is to be found of such a reference. When De Wette appeals to the great resemblance this has to public songs of a plaintive nature, as ch. iii. of Lam., he overlooks the fact, that these poems, descriptive of a nation's grief, were imitations of personal poems of a like nature. Ewald remarks, in opposition to this view of De Wette and others: "No exposition of such poems can be more erroneous than that which considers the representation of a severe illness as figurative, or which also connects therewith the idea of a whole people's lamentation being contained in it, instead of that of a single individual." But we must not, on the other hand, attribute too much importance to the state of disease,—must not take it to be a suffering as by itself. The second part speaks decidedly against this. As there the Psalmist only utters his triumphant confidence, that the Lord would deliver him from his enemies, and the bodily trouble is not mentioned, this must only have been the consequence of hostile oppression, the outgoing of his sorrow, of which he was relieved, when the cause had ceased that occasioned it. The considerations which oppose the reference to mere bodily trouble, also oppose the exposition of Luther and others, who regard the Psalm as pointing to a high spiritual conflict in the hour of death. "It is not to be thought," says Luther, "that all Christians are afflicted with the vexation and painful trials

of which this Psalm speaks, for all are not exercised to the same kind of tribulation, although all are tried with many tribulations and hardships.—He contends here with death and hell, a battle which is not to be waged with men, nor by means of temporal or spiritual temptations, but in the spirit within, nay without and above the spirit in the last terrors, where no one either sees, or hears, or feels, but the Spirit alone, who with unutterable groans prays for the holy, and intercedes for them." The words, "because of all mine enemies," in v. 7, and "depart from me all ye workers of iniquity," in v. 8, are quite inexplicable on this view.

As the Psalm does not contain a single feature of a personal kind, it is highly probable that David here expresses the feelings of those who are vexed to death with the long-continued assaults of malicious enemies. In this way, perhaps, the force of ver. 6 and 7 may be understood, where the profound grief is described in a manner which seems to indicate a supposed, rather than an actual position. Even in the desolate conditions, which will bring David to mind with his companions in affliction, despair must not be yielded to, but the very desolation be converted into a source of comfort, since, taking encouragement from him, we may implore God for help, who is ever ready to assist his own, even when matters go with them to the greatest extremities,—so that the lowest depths of sorrow is a sure harbinger of salvation, the approach of death a pledge of life. This general characteristic of the Psalm was perceived by Luther: "I conceive that we have here a common lesson and instruction, which is suited to every Christian who is plunged in such distress."

It will of course be understood, that what is here said primarily of the oppression of enemies is, in substance, equally affirmed of every other source of trouble. The particular is the accident—what is true of the species is true of the kind, and of every other species of the kind. The remarks of the Berleburg Bible on, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity:" "Depart from me, ye false tormenting accusations, ye rage and fury of menacing spirits and powers, that terrify me to death, and have shut up my blessed life as in the abyss of hell; ye are the real evil-doers, whom my external foes merely represent,"—this is perfectly correct, if it is considered as a theological exposition, and not as a grammatical historical one. That the special kind of affliction with which the Psalm is occupied does not

so prominently appear under the New Testament dispensation, so that many cannot recognise themselves among these incessant complaints regarding the malice of enemies, is a mighty proof of the world-conquering power of Christianity.

In regard to the principle which forms the basis of the Psalm, viz. that outward suffering is a chastisement for sin, nothing can be more superficial than to maintain, that this view is peculiar to the lower stage of the Old Testament. The same precisely is found in the New Testament; for example, in the declarations of our Lord himself; John v. 14; and Luke v. 20; xiii. 1, &c. In the first passage, sickness is threatened as a punishment for sin; in the second, taken away as such; in the third, the Lord threatens, on occasion of a heavy calamity, a similar calamity to all, if they repented not, implying, therefore, that the evil already inflicted was to be regarded as a punishment for sin. If the suffering were not viewed as a punishment, it could not be brought into unison with the Divine righteousness, all good moral effects from it would be lost, and it could no longer be taken as a call to repentance. An error is only, then, made when the suffering, instead of being considered in reference to sin generally, is considered as *always* bearing respect to some particular sin, to some great transgression,—an error characterised as such by our Lord in John ix. 2, 3. Far, therefore, from turning up the nose, as elevated above the religious position of the old covenant, we should rather follow the admonition of Muis: "As often as we are visited with sickness, or any other suffering, we should, after the example of David, call our sins to remembrance, and flee to God's compassion; not like the ungodly, who derive their evil, as well as their good, everywhere else than from God, and hence are never led, either by the one to repentance, or by the other to gratitude. Sickness or calamity is not to be estimated according to the mind of the flesh, but of the spirit; and we must reflect, that if God afflicts us, he deals toward us as sons, that he may chasten and improve us."

שמינית is taken by many expositors for a musical instrument, and because שמיני signifies *eight*, the kind of instrument is generally considered as a guitar with eight strings. It is impossible, however, that "the eight" can denote an instrument of eight cords. Thus, both here and in Ps. xii., the musical instrument is besides named, as also in 1 Chron. xv. 21. The correct explanation is given by those who take it for an

indication of the time. The עַל is then put to mark the relation of the particular to the general; that which forms its substratum, upon which it is laid, and according to which it is measured and regulated. But our ignorance of Heb. music renders all more minute explanations impossible.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* Calvin: "I acknowledge, Lord, that I am indeed worthy of being destroyed by thee; but as I am not in a condition to sustain thy power, deal with me, not according to my desert, but rather pardon my sins, through which I have drawn thine indignation upon me." Most expositors remark with De Wette: "The sufferer prays not for a remission, but only for an alleviation of the calamity." So also Luther: "This he regards not, nay, he will readily suffer, that he be punished and chastened; but he begs that it might be done in mercy and goodness, not in anger and fury. . . . . Therefore the prophet teaches us here, that there are two rods of God, one of mercy and goodness, another of anger and fury. Hence Jeremiah prays, chap. x. 24, "O Lord correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." But that this exposition, flowing from an unseasonable comparison of the above passage in Jeremiah, is unsound, is evident from this, that the Psalmist, in what follows, always begs the chastisement generally to be taken away, and especially from this, that in the second part, where he still experiences nothing but what he had prayed for, (comp. "The Lord hath heard my supplication, the Lord will receive my prayer,") he obtains the assurance, not of a mere alleviation of his suffering, but of an entire removal of it. The contrast is, therefore, not between a chastisement in love, and a chastisement in anger, but between a loving deliverance and a chastisement, which always proceeds from a principle of anger. The sufferer prays that, as matters had come to an extremity with him, and his powers of endurance were now completely exhausted, the sun of grace might shine through the cloud of indignation, by which it had been so long obscured. While the ungodly *only* stands under the Divine wrath, the righteous, who is always, at the same time, a sinner, is also in the midst of wrath, an object of Divine love, and this must manifest itself, whenever the expression of anger has fulfilled its purpose, and the sufferer is brought to the verge of destruction, which can alight only on the wicked. God does

not deal in a soft way with his own, he consumes what remains in them of sin by hard sufferings, but he always orders it so that they are able to bear it; when it has proceeded to a certain point, then he turns,-and, instead of concealed grace, (for even the exhibition of anger has a part to serve in the work of grace,) there is now given an open manifestation of it. But that the sufferer belongs to the number of the righteous, for whom the exchange from anger into grace is certain, he makes to appear by this, that though he feels nothing but anger, he still sees grace appearing through the midst of thick darkness. This he alone can do, who possesses an internal relation to God, and stands in living faith. In the midst of distress, to pray for grace, to hope for grace, is a sure sign of having come to occupy a gracious position, a clear pledge that grace may be looked for. Luther: "This Psalm then teaches us, that when one is plied with such assaults, he must have recourse to no other refuge than to the angry Lord himself; but that is a matter of difficulty and labour, and is always to believe against hope, Rom. iv. 18, and to strive against impossibilities.—But it is carefully to be borne in mind, that they who experience such distress should adhere, with their whole heart, to the doctrine of this Psalm, viz. that they should not let their feelings carry them too far, should not howl and cry, nor seek for human consolation; but should stand out against the heaviest trials, and suffer the hand of God, and, with the prophet here, apply nowhere but to the Lord, and say, Ah! Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, and chasten me not in thy hot displeasure. When men do not conduct themselves in this prudent way, they fall, to their great hurt, out of the hand of God, who in this manner holds them up and purifies them, especially if they seek consolation in a worldly way, and have recourse to some poor creature, the issue cannot be otherwise with them. If the clay, while being turned, falls out of the hand of the potter, it becomes more completely shattered than before, insomuch that it is useless, and the potter throws it away as good for nothing." יוכיחנ to reprove. But the discourse here is of a *sermo realis*. God reproves the sinner's guilt through the sufferings which he lays upon him. It is sometimes incorrectly remarked, that the verb here signifies precisely, to punish with the action, but elsewhere, to punish with words. חמה prop. *heat, glow*, then of the glow of anger.

Ver. 2. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are terrified.* The Psalmist, renouncing all claim of right with God, recognising, in the lowest humility, the righteousness of his sufferings, turns himself alone to the Divine compassion. In this he lays down for his foundation the principle, that God can never suffer his own wholly to perish, and on this ground entreats help from the Lord, since matters had already gone to extremities with him. Muis: "He deals with God as with a father, and sets before him his pain, in order to move him to the communication of aid." * Such childlike confidence, far from being shut out by the conviction, that sufferings have the nature of punishment, only grows upon this ground, and the one disappears with the other. אֻמְלָל, *withered, faint,* properly of plants, cannot, on account of the Patach be the partic. in Pulal with the מ dropt, but must be the pret., which, with the relative word intended to belong to it, occupies the place of an adjective—prop. *I am one who is faint.* The pret. is used precisely in this way in Isa. xxviii. 16. That the *healing* is not here to be taken for *delivering, helping* in general, is clear from the declaration, "I am faint, and my bones are terrified." The healing, therefore, must be primarily understood of the removal of his state of bodily distress. But the means of deliverance is the repulsing of the enemies, with which the bodily exhaustion would cease of itself. The words, "My bones are terrified," are admirably explained by Luther: "It is certain, that with those who suffer such assaults, their bones are so terrified in their body, that they cannot even do what bones are wont to do in the body. Just as, on the other hand, we see those who have a merry heart, overflowing with joy, having also strong bones, apt to spring up, and capable of bearing along with them the heavy and sluggish body; so that they feel as if joy were spread through their bones, like as when one pours something moist or liquid over the whole body, which refreshes it, as Solomon says, Prov. iii. 8, 'It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow (pro. moistening) to thy bones.' Where the heart, then, is troubled and sorrowful, the whole body is faint and broken; and where, again, the heart is full of gladness, the body becomes so much the stronger and more agile. Therefore, the prophet here speaks rightly, when he prays the Lord to heal him, and was so weak in body, that it could not stand upon his bones. So mighty and violent is the power of such

assaults, not leaving a corner in the whole frame that is not appalled and bruised thereby.—But man cannot love God, much less have a heart-felt desire after him, and hence is he vexed with such great troubles, which constrain and drive him to seek God's help and consolation with a vehement cry of the soul, especially when men have been sunk deep in sin, and their life has been spent in an indolent, corrupt death of flesh."

Ver. 3. *And my soul is greatly terrified; and thou, O Lord, how long?* The soul is placed in opposition to the bones. The general complaint of weakness the Psalmist draws out first in reference to his body, then to his soul. In the expression, *how long*, there is not properly an ellipsis, but an aposiopesis, occasioned by the violence of the pain, which caused the words to escape in a broken manner. This Domine quosque was Calvin's motto. The most intense pain under trouble could never extort from him another word. Luther: "He not merely begs God to hasten to him with help, but, as one impatient of delay, he complains that this is very painful to him, since in all emotions of the heart, such as fear, love, hope, hatred, and the like, a state of suspense and delay is vexatious and difficult to be borne, as Solomon says in Prov. xiii. 12, 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.' But in troubles of this kind, delay is the most severe and insupportable pain."

Ver. 4. *Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; Oh save me for thy mercies' sake.* The words, *my soul*, are not here placed instead of the personal pronoun. The Psalmist feels himself so wretched in soul and body, that he believes himself to be near death. This clearly appears from the following verse. But the soul is the principle of life. Luther: "Not for mine own services, which indeed are nothing, as is enough and more than enough proved by this terror at thine anger, and my trembling bones, and the sadness of my heart and soul. Therefore, help me for thy mercies' sake, that thine honour and the glory of thy compassion may be for ever connected with my deliverance."

Ver. 5. *For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave* (in *sheol*) *who shall give thee praise?* David had prayed, that his God would deliver him, and not permit him to sink in despair. For the granting of this prayer, he seeks to move him by the thought, that the dead do not praise him and celebrate his goodness, but only the living. Comp. Ps. cxv. 17, 18, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence,

but we shall bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore." Ps. lxxxviii. 10: "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee?" Comp. also Ps. xxx. 9; Isa. xxxviii. 18. According to the common explanation, the thought that the Lord is not remembered and praised in death is here urged as a ground of deliverance, inasmuch as God himself, to whom the praise of the righteous is the most acceptable sacrifice, must therefore be inclined to preserve them in life. The supposition on which the ground thus made out proceeds, viz. that the Lord delights in the praise of his people, is no more peculiar to the Old Testament than to the New. Comp., for example, Heb. xiii. 15. As the living God has made men for his praise, he rejoices when this end of his creation is fulfilled, when the fruit of the lips that praise him is offered. The God of the Bible is as far removed from the cold indifference and self-satisfaction of the Stoics, as the Christian is from a Stoic. But for *us* this ground receives its proper meaning, only when we place eternal death in the room of the bodily, agreeably to the clearer light which we have received regarding the state after death, and the vast change which has been brought into the times of the New Testament in reference to that future state, as we shall show in our treatise on the doctrine of the Psalms, where also we shall investigate more fully the import of sheol. *Then* ought we also, having found consolation, venture to commit our case to God, and to beg him to turn away from us the troubles which threaten to shut our mouths for ever to his praise. There is another way, however, of explaining the matter; for the prayer for deliverance may so far be grounded on the fact of one's not being able to praise God in death, as the praise of God was the Psalmist's most blessed employment, to be deprived of which would be to him the heaviest loss. And this view is strongly confirmed by the immediately preceding context, which speaks of the love of God, and naturally leads us to expect some reason connected with the Psalmist's interest. It would be contrary to the love of God to rob his own of their highest good, to make them inexpressibly miserable, by closing their mouths from praising him, before the time that the general law of mortality should require it. Understood thus, the words afford a deep, and for us humiliating, insight into the heart of pious men under the old covenant. To consider the praise of God as the highest good, as the most essential thing in life, to love life only as fur-

nishing the opportunity for that, is the highest proof of near fellowship with God.—The constr. of הודה with ל is explained by a modification of the meaning: to render praise to any one.

Ver. 6. The Psalmist shows in this and the following verse, that it was not in vain he asked for deliverance, that he had not without cause described himself as one whose mouth death was threatening to shut up from praising God. Consuming grief preyed upon his heart, and would soon carry him away. *I am weary with my groaning, every night I make my bed to swim; I make my couch to dissolve with my tears.* The groaning is here represented as the cause of all his exhaustion. The prep. ב, however, commonly marks the relation of effect to the cause. *I make my couch to dissolve.* מסה is of one meaning with the more common form מסס, to dissolve. Calvin: "Those who have even moderately experienced what it is to contend with the fear of eternal death, will find no straining in these words."

Ver. 7. *My eye consumes from vexation; it waxes old, because of all my enemies.* עשש, to fall in, to go into decay, is used, as here, of the eye in Psalm xxxi. 9, and at the same time also, of the soul. Some very improperly maintain, that the eye here is taken for the face, in which sense it never occurs. The eye is a mirror and guage of soundness, not merely as respects the soul, but also the body. By long-continued suffering, the eye sinks, becomes dull and languid, like that of an aged person. Both verbs are hence perfectly suitable to the eye. כעס may here be appropriately taken in its common signification of displeasure, vexation. It is not necessary to give it the sense of *grief*, which is never ascribed to it without arbitrariness. Nay, the former sense is here recommended by the parallel, "because of mine enemies, where the ב again is to be explained thus, that the effect is considered as taking root in its cause.

Ver. 8. David, as Calvin remarks, assumes now, as it were, a new person. He announces, that God has heard his prayer, and admonishes his enemies to desist from him, as he had now again come under God's protection. Amyrald: "Those violent commotions, in which, after the most bitter and dolorous lamentations and testimonies concerning human weakness, faith suddenly regains the ascendant, and, through the offered hope of deliverance, sheds light and serenity over the mind, are very common in the Psalms. Koester falsely: The Psalmist, in thankfulness, renounces the fellowship of sinners; this is contradicted

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by a comparison of the verse with the preceding context—also ver. 10: *Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.* The Berleb. Bible: "Presently can the righteous Lord change every thing, and illuminate with the rays of his love the dark earth of men, which was before covered with thick clouds, while in the depth of their heart also all was dark." It remarks on the *for*: "The winter is past, the rain is gone, the turtle-dove is again heard." *The voice of my weeping*, my loud weeping. Roberts, Orient. Illustr. of the Sacred Scrip. p. 316: "Silent grief is not much known in the East. Hence, when the people speak of lamentation, they say, Have I not heard the voice of his mourning?" It is customary not to give to שמע here, and in similar places, the sense of *hearing*. If God hears the cry of his own, he also accepts of it: if he will not do this, then he turns away his ear from it.

Ver. 9. *The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord receives my prayer.* The matter of this prayer we learn from ver. 10, where the Psalmist more minutely describes what he obtains in consequence of his being heard.

Ver. 10. *All mine enemies shall be ashamed and terrified; they shall return, be ashamed suddenly.* Their being terrified points back to ver. 2, 3. The terror passes over from the Psalmist to those who prepared it for themselves, according to God's righteous retribution. יבשו may be expounded by, "They shall be again ashamed," see Ewald, p. 631. But a more expressive meaning is yielded, if we take the word as standing by itself, and render "they shall return." David sees his enemies, gathered around him for the attack, all at once in alarm give way. In confirmation of this speaks the "Depart from me," ver. 8, and still more, the "return, O Lord," in ver. 4. The returning of the Lord, and the turning back of the enemies, stand related to each other as cause and effect.

PSALM VII.

The Psalmist prays the Lord for help against his cruel and blood-thirsty enemies, ver. 1, 2. He protests that he had given no occasion to their hatred, ver. 3—5. In confidence of this

blamelessness, he calls upon the Lord for assistance, and for judgment between him and his enemies, ver. 6—9. God's righteousness affords him hope that this decision and the overthrow of his enemies is near, ver. 10—13, of the fulfilment of which he has an inward assurance, so that he is able to conclude with gratitude for granted deliverance, ver. 14—17.

Ver. 1—5 possess the character of a porch, and the entrance into the proper building of the Psalm opens to us with ver. 6. This is divided into three parts of equal compass, three strophes, each of four verses; the first, that of the *prayer*, which has here a much fuller swell, and bears a far more earnest and important character than the one uttered in the introduction, because it can now, according to the ground laid down in ver. 3—5, rest itself on God's righteousness, which never leaves those to supplicate it in vain, who are justified in appealing to it; then, the strophe of *hope*, which, as the prayer is grounded upon God's righteousness, so it is awakened by a lively conviction of the same; and, finally, the strophe of *confidence*, springing from the inwardly received assurance of being heard, and celebrating the deliverance as one already obtained, distinguished from the second by the *Behold* with which it begins, and also by the preterites in ver. 14 and 17. The internal character of the two first strophes, that they contain only what is preliminary, makes itself apparent in the relation of their length to the length of those which form the proper building of the Psalm. They are, as it were, the steps by which one ascends to it. This becomes still more evident, if we bring the superscription into the body of the Psalm, which we might be justified in doing by its peculiar character, its obviously poetical construction. Reckoning that as ver. 1, the scheme would be 1. 2. 3. 4. 4. 4. Like the building itself, the porch then falls into three parts, the occasion and subject, a prefatory prayer, the removal of the hindrance to its fulfilment. The proper building (twelve verses) has the double of those belonging to the porch (six verses).

For understanding more exactly the situation in David's life, we must apply to the superscription. In this עַל דִּבְרֵי is commonly taken in the sense of, *on account of, in reference to.* But this exposition is manifestly false, the correct one being, *on account of the words occasioned by the calumnies.* A *verbal* reason may be given for this. The expression is always in the singular, and not in the plural, when it means simply *on*

account of. The passages which Gesenius adduces for the sense of *on account of*, which are, besides this, Deut. iv. 21; Jer. xiv. 1; vii. 22, do not contain a proper proof of it; they rather imply that the דברים in them all signifies *speeches* or *words*. In Deut. iv. 21, "The Lord was angry with me, על דבריכם, for your words," is to be compared with Numb. xx. 3—5, where the words of the people are recorded, by which the faith of Moses was overcome. Jer. xiv. 1 is to be rendered, "The word of the Lord came to Jeremias, on account of the words of the dearth." The words of the dearth, the prayer which Jeremias sent forth on account of the dearth, and to which the word of the Lord bore reference, follow in ver. 2—9, and the word of the Lord does not come till ver. 10. If we expound, "on account of (or concerning) the dearth," then the superscription, which, 1. announces words of the dearth, and, 2. the answer of the Lord to these words, does not seem appropriate, and so even Hitzig, in his hasty manner, declares it untenable. In Jer. vii. 22, we are, finally, to expound, "I have not commanded them upon words of burnt-offering or sacrifice." Words of sacrifice are words which respect sacrifice, as much as: I have laid upon them no commands," resting upon, or consisting in words regarding sacrifice. The correctness of this exposition is rendered clear by the contrast in ver. 23, "But *this word* did I command them," for the דבר must necessarily be taken in the preceding verse in the same sense that it bears here. The LXX. also translate the words before us, ὑπὲρ τῶν λόγων Χουσί. But what especially decides in favour of our rendering is, that David, ver. 3—5, defends himself, with the strongest protestations, against *calumnies*. From this defence we see also wherein the accusation consisted. He had been charged with having sought for the life of Saul, and, in general, recompensed good with evil. It falls now to be more narrowly considered who Cush the Benjamite is, whose calumnious charges against David gave occasion to the inditing of this Psalm. According to the supposition now generally current, there must have been an individual Benjamite of the name of Cush, through whose calumnies the hatred of Saul was raised anew against David, and with such effect that David saw himself to be placed in imminent danger of death. Now, that such calumniators and go-betweens were busy in the matter of Saul and David, we see in 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, where David says to Saul, "Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold David

seeketh thy hurt," and in chap. xxvi. 19, "But if the children of men," &c. It cannot but appear remarkable, however, that a Cush is not mentioned in the comparatively full historical details of this period, when the part which he played was of such importance as to have led David to compose this Psalm, and immortalize his name in the superscription of it,—for this we conceive to have proceeded from David himself, from its appearing to form a necessary member of the Psalm, its internal character, and the undeniable fact that Habakkuk refers to it, in a way which implies that it was even then reckoned an integrant part of the Psalm. It must further appear extraordinary that the words of Cush, according to ver. 3—5, do not import any thing like a peculiar fiction, a new sort of calumny by which he sought to rekindle the fire of Saul's anger, (the words of Cush appear as the efficient cause of the persecutions,) but rather declare the quite general allegation that David was laying wait for Saul, an allegation which, from the very first, was in the mouth of Saul, 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 13. One does not rightly understand how an individual of the name of Cush could put David into such a commotion, by merely adding his own to the many slanderous tongues which uttered this calumny, with the view of ingratiating themselves into the favour of their master—why he should have selected him in particular from the mass of such persons—why he should not rather have kept by the words of Saul himself. Others, again, consider the name Cush as symbolical, and suppose David to have applied the epithet to his enemy on account of his dark malice, as being too inveterate to admit of a change to the better. So almost all the Jewish expositors, with the exception of Abenezra, who adopted the opinion now generally received, so also Luther, who translates, "on account of the words of the Moor," and remarks, "He calls him Moor, because of his unabashed wickedness, as one incapable of any thing good or righteous. Just as we commonly call a lying and wicked fellow *black*. Hence the language of the poet: He is black, O Roman, be thou ware of him. As we also call him *fair*, who deals with people in an honest and upright manner,—who has a heart that is free of envy. Therefore it is said, David has entirely left out his proper name, and given him a new name in accordance with his perverse heart and ways." This rendering derives support from two passages in the prophets, Jer. xiii. 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?

Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." And Amos ix. 7, "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord," Chr. Ben. Michaelis: Who change not the skin, as ye change not your ways. Besides, this view is exceedingly favoured by the character of the Psalms of David, in which a great predilection discovers itself for the enigmatical, comp. for example, Psalm ix., xxii., liii., lvii., lx., where precisely similar enigmatical designations of the subject-matter are to be found, and of such a nature as to show that one can only ascribe to a predilection for the enigmatical the reason of David's here not calling his adversary by his proper name. Now, those who follow this mode of explanation are again divided in regard to the person whom David had in view. The Jewish expositors all agree upon Saul, but Luther and others upon Shimei, whose slanders are given in 2 Sam. xvi. 11. The latter supposition is, for various reasons, to be rejected, of which we shall adduce only this one as sufficient, that David could not pray during the rebellion of Absalom, "Save me from all my *persecutors*," as he does in ver. 1. He had then to do, not with persecutors, but with revolters. A special reason may be assigned in support of the reference to Saul, which probably led the Psalmist to the choice of a symbolical designation for his enemy. Saul was the son of Kish, and David plays upon this name of his father. Since it is a mere allusion that is here in question, it is no objection that Kish is written with a koph, and the less so as the two letters, so like in sound, are not rarely interchanged. See Gesen. on כ.

From the preceding investigation, we have gathered the result, that this Psalm belongs to the period of Saul's persecution. The more exact time within this period may be in some measure learned from ver. 4. There allusion is made to the fact of David's not having employed the opportunity presented for killing his persecutor. According to the history, such an opportunity was presented to David twice, 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi. Here it can only be the earliest occasion that is meant. For, after the second, David immediately passed into the land of the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxvii. 4: "And it was told Saul, that David was fled to Gath; and he sought no more again for him." On the present occasion, however, David is still involved in the most pressing danger. The fact, derived from our Psalm, that David had Saul once already in his power before the close of his per-

secutions, is of importance for judging concerning the relation of 1 Sam. xxiv. to xxvi. Hitzig's view, which maintains that only one circumstance of the kind existed as the foundation of the two narratives, and throws away chap. xxiv. as the more wonderful of the two, is thereby proved to be unfounded.

Luther remarks: "Although he composed this Psalm after the assault, that it might be seen how he now, taught by the end and issue of the assault, holds out a consolation to those who are involved in tribulation, and God's anger to those who vex and persecute pious men, furnishing instruction to others by his own and his enemies' danger and hurt; yet it is still to be believed that, in the midst of this transaction, he had the same thoughts as those which he afterwards expressed in this Psalm. For he never despaired regarding God, and he, therefore, knew well that it would turn out so, that such misfortune would befall his adversaries and opponents." This view will be admitted, when it is seen that here, as also in all the Psalms which have, in the first instance, a subjective ground in history, and carry, at the same time, a general reference, the Psalm does not, at some later period, acquire this general reference, but, from the first, was designed to possess it. Luther, however, goes into the other extreme, by reducing to nothing the signification of the Psalm, for the Psalmist himself. No reason exists for the supposition that David composed the Psalm only after the close of Saul's persecutions, and for the sole purpose of affording benefit to the church of those times from his case, and yet that supposition, as the more remote one, would need proper grounds to legitimize it.

De Wette is inclined to deny the Davidic authorship of this Psalm, and its personal character, and to throw it into the large class of plaintive Psalms. But against this argues, 1. The superscription, the originality of which is supported by the reasons already adduced. 2. The unquestionably very distinct reference to David's connection with Saul, in v. 4, not to speak of the by no means unimportant general agreement in the position,—in both cases alike a malicious persecutor hunting after the life of a blameless man, under the pretext that he was brooding ill against him. 3. The correspondence of many expressions here, with those of David as reported in the historical accounts of the period—comp. for example v. 1, "Save me from all my persecutors," with 1 Sam. xxiv. 14, "After whom is the king of Israel

come out? After whom dost thou pursue?" Also xxvi. 20, "As when one doth hunt a partridge upon the mountains." V. 3: "O Lord, my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands," with 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, where David protests that there was "neither evil nor transgression in his hand." V. 8: "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity;" and v. 11, "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry every day," with 1 Sam. xxiv. 12, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee," and v. 15, "The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and judge me out of thine hand." V. 16: "His mischief shall return upon his own head," with 1 Sam. xxv. 39, where David, on hearing the report of Nabal's death, said, "The Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head." All these corresponding expressions of David belong exactly to the point of time to which the composition of this Psalm must be referred.

A twofold didactic element particularly discovers itself in the Psalm. It teaches, 1. That one's being able to stretch forth pure hands to God, is an indispensable condition of Divine help under the oppressions of enemies; and, 2. That where this condition exists, the Divine righteousness affords an undoubted security for deliverance.

Superscrip. *Erring, of David, which he sung to the Lord, because of the words of the Moor, from Benjamin.* It only remains for us here to explain the meaning of שִׁגְיוֹן. So much is certain, that we are not warranted, when the root שָׁגָה is of such common occurrence in Hebrew, to derive our explanation from a doubtful comparison with the cognate dialects. At the outset, therefore, are to be rejected the current renderings from the Syriac by *carmen*, and from the Arabic by *plaintive song*. The latter reference also does not accord with the subject of our Psalm, and of Hab. iii., where the same word is found in the superscription, but nowhere else. For lamentation and pain are in both places not the predominating ideas. The general signification, *poem*, is not at all admissible in Habakkuk. Neither can we with propriety take the word, with the greater part of those who rest upon Hebrew etymology, as a musical designation. For it would then be very difficult to explain how it should occur merely in the superscription of this one Psalm. שָׁגָה always signifies to *err*, in a physical or moral sense, and never of itself, as Clauss

improperly supposes, as a radical meaning, to *be drunk*. Derived from this, then, (comp. on the form, Ewald, p 246), it would signify *erring, error*. According to the concise style of superscriptions, one might very easily designate a Psalm thus, which had respect to the errors and transgressions of the wicked, the more so, as a closer description is given in the following שׁר, erring, which sang, q. d. a song upon the erring, which sang. An explanation of the concise expression is to be found in that of Habakkuk, which alludes to the one before us. He describes his song as one *upon Shiggionoth*, a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet *upon* the errings, or transgressions. The whole of that chapter is taken up with the transgressions of the enemy. Against these the people of God seek help, and express their confidence regarding it, so that the chief matter of the whole Psalm is indicated by these words. It is also worthy of remark, that the word שׁגה occurs in the address of Saul to David, in 1 Sam. xxvi. 21, "behold I have played the fool and erred exceedingly," הרבה מאד ואשׁגה—a passage which, at the same time, confutes those who would maintain, that שׁגיון is too soft a word for designating such errors as those of Saul toward David—comp. also Ps. cxix. 21, 118. So that we are here also confirmed in supposing, that the dark and difficult words of the superscription refer to the subject, and that we obtain the key for understanding them whenever we have become acquainted with this. Luther understood the word as referring to the subject, but erred in giving it the sense of innocence.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, my God, in thee do I put my trust; save me from all my persecutors, and deliver me.* Calvin: "This is the true proof of our faith, that we cease not, even in our greatest distress, to trust in God. From this also we conclude, that the door is shut against our prayers, if we cannot open it with the key of confidence. Nor is it a kind of superfluous thing for him to name the Lord *his* God, but he places this as a bank against the persecutions, that they might not overflow his faith." Berleb. Bible: "If we honour God, and seek no support besides him to which we would commit ourselves, he shows us and gives us to experience, that we also need no other, but that he will be to us quite sufficient." The words, *from all mine enemies*, shows the greatness of the distress and danger, the necessity of God's agency to deliver.

Ver. 2. *Lest he tear my soul, like a lion, rending in pieces,*

while there is none to deliver. In the preceding verse mention was made of *many* persecutors, while in this David speaks only of *one.* Expositors have, for the most part, reconciled this, by understanding under the many, those who calumniated David to Saul, and whom the latter made use of for the purpose of persecuting David, but under the one enemy, Saul, who was the originator of the whole persecution, and who was, properly, the one enemy of David, because all the others only acted under his commission. As we find the same thing, however, where such an explanation cannot be adopted, it is much better to explain the singular on the principle of a *personification.* The multitude of his enemies David represents as one person, as that of the ungodly and evil-doer. This properly ideal person was certainly represented here by Saul. He speaks of his *soul,* because it concerned his life. The similitude of the lion, who cruelly rends in pieces a helpless sheep, must make God, the only and ever present deliverer, the more inclined to help. פרק stands here in its common signification, to tear in pieces.

Ver. 3. Since God cannot be called on, without exciting his anger, to vindicate an unrighteous cause, David therefore protests his innocence before he proceeds with his prayer. The apodosis follows in ver. 5. *O Lord, my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands.* According to the generality of interpreters, *that* is here meant, which was thrown out as a reproach against him, and on account of which he was persecuted by Saul. Ven.: "That which is laid to my charge, and is commonly reported." Others understand by it the crime, the mention of which immediately follows. In regard to the sense, both are the same, for the publicly proclaimed accusation against David, is just that which is spoken of in the following verse. But the first mode of explanation is the best. The crime is attributed to the hands, because they serve as instruments for its execution, and are consequently polluted. So also, purity of hands is not rarely taken for innocence.

Ver. 4. *If I have rendered evil to him that was at peace with me, or spoiled him that without cause was mine enemy.* שלמי is rendered by most expositors, *him that is at peace, that befriends me.* Luther: "Him who lived with me so peacefully," Psalm xli. 10. According to this exposition, David first purges himself of the crime of neglected gratitude and friendship, as Saul's retainers slanderously characterized the undertaking com-

mitted to him; then of revenge toward one who had causelessly become his enemy, which Saul in reality had. Or, perhaps David divides the unrighteousness of which he might have been guilty, and which would have rendered him unworthy of Divine help, into two parts, 1. Improper conduct toward Saul, during the time that David was in good understanding with him,—in which the reproaches of Saul particularly consisted; he grounded his persecution on the belief that David laid snares for him. 2. A revengeful behaviour toward him during the time of his unrighteous persecution. It is otherwise understood, however, by the older translators, in particular by the LXX. Vulg. Syr., who take the word as equivalent to משלמי, "one who recompensed me," comp. Psalm xxxviii. 21; xxxv. 12. The clause is then perfectly parallel to the following one: If I have requited him, who has done evil to me, and spoiled him who without cause was mine enemy. It is against this explanation that שלם never has the signification of *recompensing* in Kal, but always in Piel, a remark which is certainly somewhat obviated by the consideration, that the verb also, in the sense of being *at peace, in friendship with,* which appears to be borrowed from שלום, does not elsewhere occur. Besides, in the case of David, with respect to Saul, the thought of recompensing was scarcely appropriate. But there is a decisive reason against the interpretation, in the circumstance, that the sense of retaliating, which it ascribes to גמל, does not belong to this verb. If we can only expound it by *render,* then the רע must of necessity belong to גמלתי, and the interpretation in question falls to the ground. Hitzig no doubt translates: "If I have done evil to him, who requites me for it." But it is obviously harsh to suppose that the suff. is to be supplied.[1] חלץ *to draw out,* or *off,* specially of the spoiling of a dead enemy, 2 Sam. ii.

[1] גמל signifies in Arab., Pulcher tam corpore, quam moribus, elegans, decorus fuit, in the 2d conj. bonum pulchramque et bene atque eleganter fecit, in the 3d, pulchre, benigneque et humaniter egit, therefore, to be beautiful, to make and act beautifully, and do beautifully. The many derivatives are easily traced back in the Arab. to the original meaning. In Heb. also, the verb first signified to be good, beautiful; in which sense it occurs Isa. xviii. 5: בסר גמל omphases maturescentes, goodly clusters, and from it is גמל, camel, derived, as the Arabic جمل shows, camelus, sc., pleniore adultus robore. Then to make good, beautiful, so Numb. xvii. 8, "And it yielded (made good) almonds," brought them to ripeness. To this

21; Judg. xiv. 19. David alludes here to his conduct toward Saul, as the best refutation of the calumnies circulated against him. As a proof that it was in his power to have killed him, and carried off his armour, he cut off the skirt of his garment. Besides, David makes asseveration of his innocence in a quite general manner, although he has in view his behaviour toward Saul, pointing to him, specially, with respect to the calumny in question. He thus shows that his conduct toward Saul was not something peculiar, but sprung from his whole state of feeling and action. "If I ever have requited evil with evil, as you reproach me with doing, in reference to Saul, and that the more wrongfully, that towards him, in particular, I have showed a quite different spirit," &c. In reference to the sentiment here expressed, Calvin says: "If any one not merely does not repay the injury that has been received, but also strives to overcome the evil with good, he gives a solid proof of Divine goodness, and shows himself to be one of God's children, for it is only from the spirit of sonship that such a gentleness proceeds." Luther: "Let this also be marked, that David here manifests an evangelical degree of righteousness. For to recompense evil with evil, the flesh and old Adam think to be right and proper. But it was forbidden even in the law of Moses, as evil was to be inflicted only by the magistrate, conse-

also belongs the sense in which it is used, of the weaning of children, which is considered as a transplanting of them into a more perfect state; and, on this account, even in patriarchal times, the weaning-day was spent festively. Gen. xxi. 8: "And Abraham made a great feast the day that Isaac was weaned," a consideration which readily explains how, on that particular day, the mockery of the envious Ishmael should have broken out so wantonly. Finally, to show one's self good or beautiful, to act so, to give or bestow. This last signification is to be held, even where the word is used of evil, for in such cases, there is always found a silent contrast in respect to some good which should have been given. Particularly deserving of notice on this score is 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, where Saul says to David, "Thou hast rewarded (done) me good, and I have done thee evil," for I, who should likewise have done thee good, have, instead, plied thee with evil. Comp. also, Gen. i. 15, 17; 2 Chron xx. 11; Isa. iii. 9. Gousset was on the right track, when he remarked: "I confess, that when used in a bad sense, a noun as רעה, etc. is often added, whence I gather that, in its radical meaning, the word was not of ambiguous import, but rather to what was good. With על it is used only of good, not of evil, excepting in 2 Chron. xx. 11, but applied ironically, and so is reduced to a good, since it is only in the figure that evil is mentioned. Also, in Joel iv. 4, there is the same sort of irony, as appears from the subjoined antithesis." He has not, however, pursued his line of thought to its proper issue, and it has wholly escaped modern lexicographers.

quently not of one's own malice and authority." This evangelical degree of righteousness De Wette will not accord to the Old Testament. It appears to him incredible that it should be here marked as a serious crime, to recompense evil with evil. He would therefore make the sense to be: "Do I wrong him, who now deals toward me as an enemy? No, he is an enemy without cause." But what serves it to banish from the Psalm an evangelical degree of righteousness, since it cannot be banished from the history? Saul himself still accords to the Psalmist what De Wette would withhold from him! In 1 Sam. xxiv. 19, he says to him, "For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day." But that rendering of De Wette proceeds upon an ungrammatical explanation of חלץ by *doing wrong*. If it can only signify *to pull off*, the discourse cannot be of an injury, which preceded the persecution. To pull off, to spoil, can only be used of a vanquished enemy; and when he is vanquished, the consequence follows as a matter of course.

Ver. 5. Apodosis: If I have done this, then *let the enemy persecute my soul and take it, and tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.* In ver. 1 and 2 the Psalmist had prayed for deliverance of his life from all his persecutors. Here he solemnly offers his life to destruction, nay, expressly wishes this, and renounces all claim upon the Divine deliverance, if the soul, which the enemy sought to take from him, were one laden with guilt. The most inward consciousness of innocence, and the deepest horror of guilt, at the same time manifest themselves here. The declaration has a high moral meaning. It teaches the oppressed more forcibly than any direct exhortation, that they are to have just so much participation in the help of God as they keep themselves free from guilt; it demands of them that they first of all go into themselves, investigate their walk before God, as the righteous God will undertake nothing but a righteous cause. The form יִרַדֹּף has been very differently explained. The most probable view is the following: In the text stood originally the fut. in Piel, יְרַדֶּה. The Masorites would have wished to read for this the fut. in Kal, יִרְדֹּף, because the Kal, in the sense of *persecuting*, is by much more common than the Piel, which, however, is the most suitable here, as the gradation-form (Ewald, p. 195), since it ought to mark the

most violent, repeated, and continued persecution. The difference being merely in the vowels, no Kri could be admitted into the margin. Hence they remarked upon this that they united both punctuations. The one standing in the text is therefore no form, but we must read either יִרְדֹּף, which is the correct one, or יִרְדְּף, which latter form is found in many copies, the scribes of which were bolder than the Masorites. It is customary also with the Arabians, when the punctuation is doubtful, to write the points in two or more ways, comp. Ewald, p. 489. The notion still found in Ewald, p. 602, that ל sprung from אל, is still often of like import with it, and, in particular, stands of the direction to a place, turns out, on a closer examination of the examples collected by Winer, *Lex.* p. 510, to be incorrect. The ל always marks, quite differently from אל, the relation of *belonging to*. Accordingly, here רמסלארץ is to "tread down so, that it belongs to the earth," and the honour also is made to dwell so, that it henceforth is a *property* of the dust. The *dwelling* expresses a remaining, a laying down, from which one can never rise up again. According to De Wette, the expressions, "my soul, my life, and mine honour," are a mere circumlocution for the pers. pron. But this is manifestly false. "My soul," as the parallel "my life," shows, which is never a substitute for the pron., is used here, as in ver. 1, because the question now was of David's life. That "my honour" does not stand for the pron. is already obvious from the contrast in regard to *the dust*. According to many expositors, David offers here, in case he should be found guilty, to suffer the loss of both kinds of earthly goods, which were most highly prized by Saul, *life* and *glory*. So already Calvin: "The sense is, not merely let the enemy destroy me, but let him also add all manner of insult to the dead, so that my name may abide in mud and dirt;" in which case the loss of honour is too closely connected with the disgrace of his memory after death, instead of a treatment with dishonour in and after death. Others, however, take the honour as a designation of the soul, corresponding to "my soul and my life," and implying that David was ready to sacrifice his noblest part. For this latter exposition there are two conclusive reasons, 1. The putting of "mine honour" for my soul, in so far as this forms the glory of man, is what elevates him above the whole animal creation, to which, in his bodily part, he is related—he alone being

in his soul a breath of God, Gen. ii. 7—is according to the precedent in Gen. xlix. 6, of such frequent use in the Psalms of David (comp. Psalm xvi. 9; lvii. 8; cviii. 2), that it is very natural to think of the honour in this sense, in connection with the soul and the life. 2. The reference of our verse to ver. 2 is also in favour of this sense. The Psalmist here manifestly consents that the enemy, in case of his guilt, might accomplish the end there said to have been aimed at by him. But then it is the soul only that is spoken of, "lest he tear my soul like a lion." The enemy reaches after David's soul, and his soul he will readily give him, if it were laden with guilt; yet, since the accusations of the enemy were only lying inventions, God could not but deliver his soul. To make to dwell in the dust, marks a shameful and humiliating destruction. It is suitably to the relation of "mine honour," to "my life," stronger than "treading upon the earth." The honour of the Psalmist, his glory, must lie *covered with dust* upon the ground.

Ver. 6. In consciousness of his innocence, the Psalmist demands of the Lord judgment against his enemies. The Berleb. Bible points out well the relation to the preceding context, "But, because my conscience acquits me of such things, and testifies that I am innocent in that respect, therefore I seek thy protection, and call upon thy righteousness, which is wont to defend the guiltless." *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself with the rage of mine enemies; and awake for me, thou who ordainest judgment.* The "lift up" is stronger than "arise," and is q. d.: show thyself mighty, comp. Isa. xxxiii. 10, where the "rising" is connected with "lifting one's self up." עברה, prop. an *overstepping*, then especially of a violent *rage*, breaking through all bounds of order. The stat. constr. in plural has עַבְרוֹת in Job xl. 11. But the variation is capable of explanation from the general inclination of the gutturals to the A sound, Ewald, p. 110; which may be the more easily justified here, as the vowel is merely an assumed one, formed out of two schwas. Expositors generally translate: "Against the rage of mine enemies." But this rendering weakens the sense, while it confounds the obviously introduced contrast between the anger of God and the anger of the enemies. בעברות stands in immediate reference to the preceding באפך, and the ב must therefore be similarly rendered here. This was already seen by Calvin: "The rage of his enemies is placed by him against the anger of God. Whilst

the ungodly burn, and belch out the flames of their rage, he begs God that he also would wax hot." "Awake for me," is for, "turn thyself toward me in a waking state." *Thou hast ordained judgment.* As regards the matter, the clause is a relative one: Thou, who ordainest judgment; and that this is not externally marked, is to be explained from the circumstance that poetry loves the abrupt and concise. David begins here to ground his prayer for help upon the truth that God is the righteous judge of the world. This thought is farther expanded in what follows. We must not translate with De Wette: Order judgment, command that a day of judgment be appointed, for then the ו, relative, would certainly have been found. The sense also of the first exposition is more suitable. David says here, the Lord has ordained judgment, inasmuch as the exercise of judgment is a necessary manifestation of his nature, of his holiness and righteousness, with reference, perhaps, to the numerous declarations of God concerning this exercise of judgment—which, however, only so far come into view, as they conceal the fact of God's having appointed judgment, not: thou hast ordained judgment *in*, but *according to* thy word; for in the law judgment is not ordained or settled, but announced. In what follows, then, he calls upon God actually to hold this judgment: help me, for thou hast ordained judgment, therefore judge the people first, and then in particular me.

Ver. 7. *And the congregation of the peoples compass thee about; and over it return thou on high.* The main idea of the verse is, Show thyself, O Lord, as the judge of the world. That special act of God's judgment is a consequence of his being judge of the whole world. If this were not the case, the expectation of such a thing would be without ground, a mere act of arbitrary procedure. Hence, the pointing to an universal judgment is not rarely set forth in the Psalms and Prophets as the announcement of a special judgment, or a prayer for that—comp. Mic. i. 2, ss., Isa. ii. 9, ss. The proper wish of the Psalmist is contained in ver. 8, "Judge me." But because the special exercise of judgment is only an expression of the general comprehensive power in that respect, the Psalmist first of all prays that the latter might disclose itself: Thou hast arranged judgment; come then to the judgment of the world; come also to the judgment between me and my enemies. The clothing of this idea is taken from the manner of pronouncing judgment, which still prevails

in the east, where the king, surrounded by the crowd of contending parties, ascends the throne, and then gives forth the judgment. The Lord comes down from his lofty seat in the heavens —this is what is to be understood by המרום, the heights, as appears from the quite similar representation in Psalm lxviii., see especially ver. 18, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men"—around him are gathered all nations of the earth; after the judgment has been held, he returns back to heaven. This representation is in perfect adaptation to the common figurative description of *every* manifestation of God, as of a bringing down of heaven upon earth. The true God is at once above and in the world, whilst the self-made god is either wholly shut out from it, after the manner of the naturalists, or wholly depressed to the world, and amalgamated with it, after the manner of the pantheists. Neither לאמים nor עמים ever marks the family of Israel, of whom various expositors, incapable of apprehending the true sense, here think. (In Deut. xxxiii. 3, 19, the word עמים signifies, not nations, but people or persons.) Nor are the nations to be considered merely in the light of witnesses of the judgment, but rather as those on whom the judgment is to be exercised. This is rendered undeniably clear from the words in next verse. "The Lord shall judge the people;" comp. also Micah i. 3. עליה, *over* or *above it*, raising thyself above it, refers to the assemblage of the nations. שוב־למרום, to return back, that one may possess the height; right, as to the sense, but not grammatically: q. d. return to the height. Venema: Universo coetu inspectante cœlum, unde descendisti, repete. In disproof of De Wette's constrained interpretation: "Over it turn to the height, *i.e.* to thy elevated seat upon Mount Zion," which seat of his, Jehovah had in a manner left, as he was not exercising righteousness among the people, and permitting the good to be oppressed, it is enough to remark that המרום is never used of Mount Zion, but always of God's lofty dwelling-place in the heavens. Besides, at the time of this Psalm's composition, Mount Zion was still not the seat of the Lord, the "over it" is not suitable, &c. Luther has also quite failed in giving the right meaning: "That the people again assemble before thee, and for their sakes return again on high."

Ver. 8. *The Lord judges the people; judge me also, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and integrity upon me.* David re-

presents his integrity as a cover and shield, which places him in safety against hostile assaults, and insures him of Divine assistance. Thereupon is to be explained the עַל. There is no need of supplying with several: do to me. That the Psalmist here prays God to judge him according to his righteousness and innocence, agrees quite well with that in Psalm cxliii. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." The discourse here, as may be seen by comparing ver. 3—5, is properly of righteousness in reference to a determinate matter, which certainly cannot be regarded otherwise than as an indication of righteousness generally, yet still only presupposes such a righteousness, as does not exclude the exercise of Divine mercy in pardoning, but only fits us for becoming partakers thereof.

Ver. 9. *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, and establish the just; and the trier of the heart and reins art thou, O righteous God.* David's conflict with Saul was not a conflict between individuals, but between parties; Saul's cause was espoused by the wicked as theirs, and David's by the righteous, comp. the often misunderstood passage, 1 Sam. xxii. 2. Therefore, the Psalmist prays, that in Saul the wicked might be judged, in him the righteous delivered. Many render: "May he, the Lord, bring to an end." But as there is an address to the Lord in the preceding verse, and also in what follows, it was scarcely to be expected that he should here be spoken of in the third person. גָּמַר occurs also elsewhere in the Psalms in an intrans. sense, xii. 1; lxxvii. 8. The words: "The trier art thou," &c., point to the Divine righteousness, according to which God does not hold himself in a state of indifference toward the righteous and the wicked, but constantly makes use of his omniscience to penetrate into the inmost regions of the heart, in order to discern the one and the other, and to visit them with blessing or punishment accordingly. The proving of the heart and the reins comes into consideration, as is shown by the "O righteous God," not as inferring the possibility, but as insuring the reality of the Divine judgment, not as the manifestation of the Divine omniscience, but as the manifestation of the Divine righteousness. Comp. Jer. xvii. 10, "I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings;" xx. 12, "And, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, I shall see my re-

venge on them." The *and* also receives a better explanation by this view than the other, which should rather have led us to expect a *then*, insomuch that some of its supporters, for example Ewald, are disposed to throw it out of the text entirely. Though the trying of the heart and reins is a spontaneous activity of God, yet, in the words before us, which, in their primary aspect, simply ascribe this activity to God, there is at the same time expressed, when viewed in connection with the preceding entreaties, an indirect solicitation to exercise such activity—thou triest, &c., so try then—and the second clause of the verse comes into parallelism with the first. Since God tries the heart and the reins, he cannot but bring to an end the wickedness of the wicked, and establish the righteous. Many translate: And the righteous God tries the heart and the reins; but it is better to regard this as a direct address to God, in accordance with the preceding.

Ver. 10. In the room of the prayer, appears now the hope grounded upon the righteousness of God, which manifests itself in defence of the righteous, and for the destruction of the wicked. *My shield is with God, who delivers the upright in heart.* The עַל cannot mean precisely *with* here. Where this sense appears to prevail, the connection with the radical meaning *upon* can still be pointed out. Here the use of the preposition may be explained thus, that the shield stands figuratively for *defence*, either it depends upon God to protect me, to hold his shield over me (comp. Judges xix. 20, "All thy wants are upon me," it lies upon me to relieve them, Psalm lvi. 12, "Thy vows are upon me, O God"), or my defence rests upon God, has him for its foundation. This latter supposition is favoured by Psalm lxii. 7, "Upon God is my salvation and my glory." While David expects his deliverance only from the principle that God saves the upright, he supplies a new evidence of his having a good conscience.

Ver. 11. *God judges the righteous, and God is angry every day.* This is David's double ground of hope. For he is a righteous man, and his enemies are the ungodly. Many take שׁוֹפֵט as a subst., and עָדִיק as the adjective belonging to it: God is a righteous judge. But the parallel with וְעֵם requires that שׁוֹפֵט also should be taken as a participle standing for the verb finite. This is confirmed by a comparison with ver. 8. To the "judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness," there corresponds

here, the "God judges the righteous;" there the prayer, here the positive principle, which guarantees the fulfilment of the prayer. The *every day, continually*, points to this, that the Divine judgment upon ungodliness is one always realising itself in the course of history, so that they who practise it can never be secure, but are always in danger of a sudden overthrow.

Ver. 12. *If he turn not, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.* The subject of the verb *turn*, the ungodly, is to be borrowed from the second half of the preceding verse, where it is contained by implication. It is erroneous to suppose with many that a particular enemy, Saul, is here described as such. That the Psalmist delineates here only in a general way the punishment of the ungodly, is clear even from the preceding context. This and the next verse are merely a further expansion of that, "God is angry every day," which, from the idea of continuance, cannot be confined to the enemies of David. The punishment of the enemies of David follows upon this, with the same necessity, as from the general principle, "God judges the righteous," the deliverance of David. The "turning back" is wider than the "turning back to the Lord." It denotes merely in the general the ceasing from former doings and strivings, while the latter, at the same time, indicates the aim toward which the changed course is directed. Koester justly remarks that it perfectly accords with the placable spirit of the Psalm, comp. ver. 4, that David should first wish the conversion of the enemy. *He will whet his sword.* The Lord is represented under the image of a warrior who prepares himself for the attack, comp. Deut. xxxii. 41, "I whet my glittering sword, and my hand lays hold on judgment." This passage, which the mention of arrows immediately after the sword, as here, proves more certainly to have been in the eye of the Psalmist, is, of itself, sufficient to confute those who suppose that the ungodly are the subject of the whole verse. *And made it ready*—he places the arrows upon it. Falsely, De Wette: "And judges him." This signification does not accord with the parallel passage, Psalm xi. 2, nor is generally the meaning of the verb כּוּן in Pilel. In all the passages which Gesenius adduces for the sense of *judging*, that of preparing, making ready, charging, should rather be admitted. The *judging* is first introduced in ver. 13. It is a remarkable instance of Divine foresight, but such as often occurs in history, that in the death

of Saul, the bow and the sword both actually had their share. Saul was hit by the hostile archers, and sore pressed, so that he despaired of his life. "Then said he to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me; but his armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it," 1 Sam. xxxi. 3, 4. The apparently coarse manner of expression in our text, representing God as a warrior, equipped with sword and bow, has, besides, for its foundation, the coarseness of sinners, and the weakness of faith on the part of believers, which does not direct itself against the visible danger, with pure thoughts of God's controlling agency, but seeks to clothe these thoughts with flesh and blood, and regards the judge as standing over against the sinner, man against man, sword against sword. But this kind of representation shows, at the same time, a very lively faith, which alone could, satisfying this necessity of faith's weakness, clothe the judge and avenger with flesh and blood. The idea of God's righteousness must have possessed great vigour to render such a representation possible. There are some excellent remarks upon the ground of it in Luther, who, however, too much overlooks the fact, that the Psalmist presents before his eyes, this form of an angry and avenging God, primarily with the view of strengthening, by its consideration, his own hope, and pays too little regard to the distinction between the Psalmist, who only indirectly teaches what he described as part of his own inward experience, and the prophet: "The prophet takes a lesson from a coarse human similitude, in order that he might inspire terror into the ungodly. For he speaks against stupid and hardened people, who would not apprehend the reality of a Divine judgment, of which he had just spoken; but they might possibly be brought to consider this by greater earnestness on the part of man.—Now, the prophet is not satisfied with thinking of the sword, but he adds thereto the bow; even this does not satisfy him, but he describes how it is already stretched, and aim is taken, and the arrows are applied to it, as here follows. So hard, stiff-necked, and unabashed are the ungodly, that however many threatenings may be urged against them, they will still remain unmoved. But in these words he forcibly describes how God's anger presses hard upon the ungodly, though they will never understand this until they actu-

ally experience it.—It is also to be remarked here, that we have had so frightful a threatening and indignation against the ungodly in no Psalm before this; neither has the Spirit of God attacked them with so many words. Then in the following verses, he also recounts their plans and purposes, shows how these shall not be in vain, but shall return again upon their own head. So that it clearly and manifestly appears to all those who suffer wrong and reproach, as a matter of consolation, that God hates such revilers and slanderers above all other characters."

Ver. 13. *And he has prepared for him the instruments of death, he makes his arrows burning.* The ל with the verb הכין denotes the object upon which something is directed, which concerns the judging, here, therefore the ungodly. The object stands here with peculiar emphasis in the foreground. The Psalmist draws attention to this, how dangerous it is to be the target at which God levels his attack. דלק *to burn.* In sieges it is customary to wrap round the arrows burning matter, and to shoot them after being kindled.

Ver. 14. *Behold he travails with mischief, and is big with misery, and brings forth falsehood.* In place of the hope which springs out of the consideration of God's righteousness, according to which he helps the righteous, but prepares for the wicked a fearful destruction, confidence now breaks forth. The Psalmist sees with his eyes how the malicious plots of the wicked, for the ruin of the righteous, are brought to nought, and turn out to their own destruction. The "behold," and the prophetic pret., are a wonderful proof of the strength of faith, which can overlook what violently presses upon the sense, and see what is still invisible. Luther: "He first says, 'behold,' as if he himself wondered, and called upon all to come, as it were to a rare spectacle. For it appears far otherwise to our view." Luther translates: Behold he has evil in his heart, with misfortune he is pregnant, *but* he will bring forth a failure; and he is followed by De Wette, Hitzig, &c. But we must rather refer the words, "he is big with misery," to the issue as full of wretchedness for the wicked. This is supported, 1. By the accents which connect the words, not with what precedes, but with what follows, comp. ver. 15; 2. and, besides, the being in labour, must follow upon the being pregnant.

Ver. 15. The same thought, under another image. *He has digged a pit, and hollowed it out, but he falls into the ditch, which*

he makes. Luther: "All this is written for the consolation of those who are oppressed, to the end that they may be sure and certain, that the evil, which is directed against them, shall fall upon their revilers and persecutors. At the same time, it is also written for a terror to the ungodly, persecutors, and slanderers, whose excessive rashness and security needs to be alarmed, as the weakness of the other to be strengthened." It is customary to dig pits, and cover them with foliage, in order to catch lions and other wild beasts in them. From such custom the image is here taken:—*And hollowed it out.* This addition marks the depth of the pit dug by him, the anxiety of the wicked to have it made as deep as possible. Luther: "See how admirably he expresses the hot burning fury of the ungodly, not simply declaring: he has dug a pit, but adding to this: and hollowed it out. So active and diligent are they to have the pit dug, and the hole prepared. They try every thing, they explore every thing, and not satisfied that they have dug a pit, but clear it out and make it deep, as deep as they possibly can, that they may destroy and subvert the innocent. In this way the Jews acted; although they were eager to have Christ put to death, and their whole efforts were directed thereto, still they were not satisfied that he should die a painful death, but took care, that his death should be of the most shameful kind, just as if they had dug a very deep pit for him, and cleared it out. So are all godless persecutors and revilers disposed, not to be satisfied with merely destroying their neighbour, but strive as much as in them lies, to bring them to the most shameful end." Before יפעל the pron. relat. is to be supplied, or more correctly, there is here an usage of very frequent occurrence, especially in poetry, of placing the relative clause after the substantive without any particular word. Comp. Ewald, p. 646. The pron. suff. also is awanting, because the sense is clear from the substantive immediately preceding, but poetry is fond of expressive shortness. Therefore: he falls into the pit he makes. We must not expound: into the pit, which he *has made.* The wicked man is still occupied with the pit, still working at it, when he falls into it. The punishment overtakes him in the midst of his guilty career. Kaiser supposes without ground, that a deliverance already past is here celebrated. But that is not necessarily indicated by the fut. with vau conv. ויפל. For this form only marks that an action fol-

lows out of the preceding. But this being the whole, it may stand also for the present and the future, although certainly it is most commonly used of the past. Therefore not: he fell, but he falls. Ewald, p. 541.

Ver. 16. *His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his iniquity shall come down upon his own pate,* like a stone or an arrow, which, having been thrown aloft, returns upon the head of him who threw it. The ב in בראשו is the ב, which stands with verbs of motion, when the object moved remains in its place. *Upon* his head, is not grammatically correct. The head is considered as the seat of the mischief. The mischief not merely falls *upon it,* but presses into it. עמל always denotes the evil one suffers, not that which one inflicts. The evil properly coming from without, is here marked through the suffix, referring to the ungodly, as belonging to him, as wrought by him. This verse, like the two preceding ones, points to "the elastic nature of right, according to which every infliction calls forth a counter infliction," as that is a necessary consequence of the existence of a living God. God, indeed, cannot be thought of without the idea of recompense. Luther: "For this is the incomprehensible nature of the Divine judgment, that God catches the wicked with their own plots and counsels, and leads them into the destruction which they had themselves devised."

Ver. 17. In what precedes, the Psalmist had attained to a living acquaintance with the Divine righteousness, and described its manifestations. Here he concludes with giving praise to God on account of this his righteousness, and generally on account of his glorious nature, or with the declaration, that he will praise him on behalf of that. *I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.* According to his righteousness, agreeably to that, so that the righteousness and the praise shall correspond. The verse forms a suitable conclusion to the strophe of *seeing.* For the manifestations of Divine righteousness are taken for granted in it as having been already given.

PSALM VIII.

The grand topic of this Psalm must, according to various expositors, be twofold, the greatness of God as the God of the world and nature, and his goodness toward man. But a more careful examination of it shows, that the latter topic alone is the proper theme, to which the other is merely subordinate; that the greatness of the Lord in the creation of the world is only celebrated for the purpose of presenting in a more striking light his condescending goodness towards weak man.—God's glory—this is the train of thought—is displayed upon earth through the splendour of the heavenly architecture, in so impressive, feeling, and palpable a manner, that even children apprehend it, and by means of the wondering delight which they experience, and the praise which they stammer forth to him, put to shame the folly of his hardened blasphemers, v. 1, 2. —When one considers this glory and greatness of God as reflected from the heavens, how must he be filled with adoring wonder, with internal gratitude, that such a God should have so taken notice of weak man, who appears unworthy of the least regard from him, crowned him with honour, made him his vicegerent upon earth, and delivered into his hands the lordship thereof, v. 3—8. Great indeed is God, as well in the dignity which, in the fulness of his love and condescension, he has conferred on men, as in the glory of the heavens!—This, then, is the theme, *The greatness of God in the greatness of man.*

The Psalm needs no historical exposition, and bears none. It has been often said, that David was raised to the adoration of God, by the sight of the starry sky. And in this way it has been commonly explained, why in the third verse, amid the glorious works of God in the heavens, the sun is omitted, and the moon and the stars only are mentioned. That this idea is not well-grounded, we shall see when we come to the exposition of the verse. That David composed this Psalm, not as a shepherd, as some have supposed, for the sake of their sentimentality, but as king, is probable from the familiar reference in the Psalm to the kingly glory, comp. v. 1 and 5. In his shepherd-state, David had not yet applied himself to indite Psalms; and in him also was verified the proverb, "the wine-press only produces the

wine," and this, "necessity makes men pray." It was in the persecutions that he endured from Saul, that the springs of divine song were made to flow in him.

Passages in this Psalm are applied to Christ, and this has led many expositors to understand the whole Psalm of him alone. But as many internal grounds oppose this view, so it is not sufficiently confirmed by the authority of the New Testament. This will appear by an explanation of the particular passages. In Matt. xxi. 16, Christ rebukes the Pharisees, who could not contain themselves because children were crying to him Hosanna, by bringing to their remembrance the 2d verse of this Psalm, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" From this quotation, it does not at all appear that the Lord understood the Psalm in reference to himself. It is enough that the idea uttered in the Psalm,—the high-minded, who proudly shut their heart to the impression of what is divine, withstanding, and impiously blaspheming it, but put to shame by the cheerful acknowledgment of it, which is frankly made by the unsophisticated mind of childhood,—enough that this is here also exemplified. The stroke which the Lord here dealt to the Pharisees, was a completely silencing one; they must have felt it in their innermost conscience. The second quotation from this Psalm, in Heb. ii. 6—9, appears to favour more the Messianic interpretation. There ver. 4, 5, are applied to Christ's glory, and his lordship over all creation. But neither are we necessitated by this passage to refer the Psalm, in its primary and proper sense, to Christ. Although David, in the first instance, speaks of the human race generally, the writer of the Epistle might still justly refer what is said to Christ, in its highest and fullest sense. For while the glory of human nature, as here delineated, has been so deteriorated through the fall, that it is to be seen only in small fragments, and what is here said is to be referred to the idea rather than to the reality, it appears anew in Christ in full splendour. The writer of the Epistle describes the glory obtained for humanity in Christ over the things of creation, whereby it is to be raised above the angels, in the words of the 4th and 5th verse of this Psalm. The common application of the beginning of ver. 5, as rendered in the LXX., to the humiliation of Christ, is not properly an exposition, but a popular adaptation. This is unquestionably the case also with the third quotation, in 1 Cor. xv. 27.

Paul there refers the words of ver. 6, "Thou hast put all things under his feet," to Christ, because the glory of humanity above the whole creation, lost in Adam, and reduced to a base servitude, is to be again restored in Christ, and that, indeed, in a still higher and more perfect manner than it was possessed by Adam. The following remarks may contribute to a deeper insight into the ideal Messianic meaning of this Psalm. The Psalm stands in the closest connection with the first chapter of Genesis. What is written there of the dignity with which God invested man over the works of his hands, whom he placed as his representative on earth, and endowed with the lordship of creation, that is here made the subject of contemplation and praise. *We have just that passage in Genesis turned into a prayer for us.* But how far man still really possesses that glory, what remains of it, how much of it has been lost, of this the Psalmist takes no thought. His object was simply to praise the goodness of God, which still remained the same, as God, whose gifts are without repentance, has not arbitrarily withdrawn what he gave, only man, by his folly, has suffered himself to be robbed of it. But, even with this single eye upon the goodness of God, which on his part continues unabated, it is to be understood that the entire representation holds good only at the beginning and the end, and does but very imperfectly suit the middle, in which we, along with the Psalmist, now stand. When this middle is placed distinctly before the eye, man is represented quite otherwise in the Old Testament than we find him here,—as a sleep, a shadow, a falling leaf, a worm, as dust and ashes. And why God is here thanked, see especially Isa. xi. 6—9, where the same reference is made as here to Gen. i., and where a restitution is promised to man in the times of Messiah, of the relation he originally held to the earth, but which is now in a state of prostration. Accordingly, the matter of this Psalm can find its full verification only in the future, and for the present it applies to none but Christ, in whom human nature again possesses the dignity and glory over creation, which it lost in Adam. By and by, when the moral consequences of the fall have been swept away, this also shall come to be the common inheritance of the human family.

עַל־הַגִּתִּית upon the harp of Gath, or in the Gathic style. As the termination in ־ִי in adjectives, which are derived from

proper names, is rare, and as גִּתִּי in the sense of Gathic, of Gath, the city of the Philistines, occurs frequently, (comp. Jos. xiii. 3, 2 Sam. vi. 10, 11; xv. 18,) we must reject, as arbitrary, all other derivations, such as from גַּת, a wine-press, and still more those from the purely imaginary גַּת cantus fidium. Now, the Gittith may be either an instrument used in Gath, or a tune or air originated there, just as the Greeks speak of a Lydian or Phrygian air, and according to analogy, of the expression, "upon the Sheminith." It is worthy of remark, that all the three Psalms distinguished by this name, (besides this, lxxxi. lxxxiv.) are of a joyful, thanksgiving character, from which it may be inferred, that the Gittith was an instrument of cheerful sound, or a lively air.

Ver. 1. *Jehovah, our Lord, how glorious is thy name in all the earth! who hast crowned the heavens with thy majesty.* The "our Lord," is used to show that the Psalmist speaks here, and throughout the Psalm, not in his own name, but in that of the whole human race. That the word שֵׁם is ever used as a mere description of the person, without some farther reference, is just as erroneous as the opinion, that it is synonymous with *renown*. The name, in the language of the ancient world, generally, and of the Hebrews in particular, is the image and expression of the being, the echo of its manifestation. God, as existing secretly in himself, is nameless. But a manifestation, and a name, are inseparable from each other. The name proceeds quite naturally out of it, and the more glorious the manifestation, so much more glorious also is the name, that is, it is the more full and significant. Now, the following words declare through what means the name of God has become glorious upon the whole earth, point to the manifestation, whose product is the glorious name. They are to be translated literally: Thou, in respect to the giving thy glory, art above the heavens. This, according to most interpreters, is, as if it had been said: Thou, who hast not confined thyself to overspread the earth with thy glory, but who hast also crowned the heavens with it, hast set it upon these as a crown. But if we compare ver. 3, where the heavens alone are spoken of, it will be seen that the glory of the name of God upon earth, is here only in so far celebrated, as God is glorified upon it through the magnificence of the hea-

vens. This is also implied in the אשר, which indicates in what respect, and by what means God's name is glorious upon the earth, or how he has acquired his glory upon earth. תנה is the inf. constr. in Kal of נתן. Those of the verbs פן, which form the fut. upon Zere or Patach, commonly throw away in inf. constr. the נ pointed with Schwa, for the small word the feminal termination תַ is commonly chosen; from נתן, תנת, contracted תת. In place of this we find here the fem. term. הַ just as besides the common inf. constr. of ירד, רדת, the form רדד also occurs, see Ewald, p. 460. Now the inf. governs here, as usual, the case of the verb fin.: the giving thy glory, Ew., p. 622. We must not translate with Ewald and Winer: the giving of thy glory; for the form of the inf. constr. with the append. ת fem. has precisely the nature of a noun standing in stat. absol. There is not a single instance to be found, where such a form is immediately connected with a following noun. It should then, of necessity, have been תֵת, and not תנה.—The prep. על instead of ב, which we would rather have expected, is to be explained in this way, that הוד, glory, is considered as a crown, which the Lord sets upon the heavens, comp. ver. 5.—The common exposition takes the inf. of נתן here, for the preterite. But this cannot be admitted, for two reasons. First, the inf. constr. never stands in place of the pret., but only the inf. absol., which must have been נָתוֹן, because נ, furnished with a long vowel, is not to be dropt. And then the inf. absol. also can stand for the pret. only when it is used of a pure action, expressed by the inf., but not when used of the acting person. This, however, is so far from being the case here, that the acting person is just what comes prominently into view. The attempt of Hitzig, and others, to derive the word from another verb than נתן, is already refuted by the parallel passages, 1 Chron. xxix. 25, Numb. xxvii. 20, Dan. xi. 21, in which נתן הוד is found exactly as here, with על. We willingly omit other still more violent expositions, such as that of Hoffmann, who would take the word as an imperative.—הוד is rendered by many expositors, *renown*, but this signification never belongs to it; it always means *glory*. God has clad the heavens with his glory, in that he has set in them the sun, moon, and stars, as proofs of his almighty power and greatness.

Ver. 2. *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast prepared for thyself a power.* עוללים, are children in general. יונקים, children till the third year, up to which the Hebrew women used to suckle their children. De Wette, without cause, stumbles at the circumstance, that praise to God is here ascribed to sucklings. Even a little child is conscious of pleasure, in looking upon the lovely scenes of nature, in particular, upon the starry heavens, which are here specifically mentioned, and this admiration of the works of God is a sort of silent praising of them. According to De Wette, and others, the sense must be: "The child, his existence, his life, his advancement, &c., proclaim God as creator." Or: "The child, even in his happy being, in the fulness of his delight in life, is a witness of God's renown." But the incorrectness of this view is evinced partly by its rendering the expression, "out of the mouth," devoid of meaning,—for no one surely will agree with Hoffman in thinking, that "the mouth" here is superfluous,—and partly because the allusion to children, in proof of the creative power of God, is here quite unsuitable, as in the following verse, which again takes up and resumes the subject of ver. 1 and 2, it is God's greatness in the framework of the world that is discoursed of. The beautiful structure and connection of the Psalm is entirely destroyed, if the children are made to praise God through their being, and not through their admiration of the glory of God, as displayed in the heavens,—a reason which also disproves the view of Umbreit, who, artfully enough, seeks to get rid of the difficulty connected with "the mouth," by referring it "to the living breath of the new-born child, to the first cry of the babe, and the first movement of the infant lips to pronounce words." It is further to be noticed, that it would be quite unsuitable to bring forward children here, as proofs of the creative power of God, followed up, as it would presently be, by a declaration of the nothingness of man, for the purpose of magnifying the more the grace of God. If children were indeed viewed as proclaiming the glory of God, not less than the starry heavens, it might seem nothing wonderful or unexpected, that God should bestow so richly of his favour upon men. יסד commonly means, to *lay the foundation of,* and then also to *prepare* in general. עז most modern commentators take in the sense of *praise, renown;* but we must retain, with Calvin and others, the sense of *might, strength;* this seems the more suitable: God needs for his im-

potent and foolish adversaries, no other combatants than children, who are themselves in a condition to maintain his cause. And what is quite decisive, a more careful consideration of the passages, in which the word, according to grammarians and lexicographers, should signify *praise*, shows that such a meaning is quite imaginary. עֹז *always* signifies *might* or *strength*. By taking it in the sense of *praise* here, the meaning is disfigured. The marked contrast between the proud enemies of God, and the little children whom he sets up against them as his force of war, then completely disappears. But God obtains the victory over his rebellious subjects, by means of children, in so far as it is through their conscious or unconscious praise of his glory, as that is manifested in the splendour of his creation, especially of the starry firmament, that he puts to shame the hardihood of the deniers of his being or his perfections. Even Koester, who otherwise egregiously errs in the right construction of the Psalm, returns here to the correct explanation: "In עֹז there is contained a pointed irony, indicating that the lisping of infants forms a sort of tower of defence (?) against the violent assaults of the disowners of God, which is perfectly sufficient."

In order to still the enemy and the revengeful, all those who, if they were visited by thee for their sins, would burn against thee with foolish rage and impotent revenge. The words are a farther extension of the preceding ones: because of thine adversaries. The enemy and the revengeful are united here together, just as in Psalm xliv. 16, where they have for their accompaniment the reproacher and blasphemer How revenge might be spoken of in respect to God, is shown especially by the book of Job, where, for example, Elihu in ch. xxxvi. 13, speaks of the lawless, "who heap up wrath, and cry not when he bindeth them;" that is, when God inflicts sufferings upon them, they flee not for pardon and grace, but kick against him, referring specially to Job, who, because punishment of sin was combined with want of acknowledgment of sin, turned his spirit against God, and cried out against him to the blood-avenger of his wrong, existing not on earth but in heaven: "O earth, cover ~~not thou my blood~~, and let my cry have no place." In modern literature, nothing could be of more service to keep us from every attempt to force a foreign meaning upon מִתְנַקֵּם, than the journal of Carl von Hohenhausen, in the work: C. v. Hohen.

Untergang eines Jünglings von achtzehn Jahren, Braunschw. 1836. What but the most burning revenge discovers itself there in such expressions as the following: "Lord of the heavens and the earth, what have I done to thee, that thou crushest me;" "no words of reproach are too big for me, they are all little for the weight of my sufferings;" "Almighty! why must I be trodden down and crushed to pieces so very slowly! were a man to do this, one would say, that it must proceed from the most miserable weakness, or most wretched malice." It everywhere appears, that he would fain have got rid of God.

Ver. 3. *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy hands* —inasmuch as men can make nothing without fingers, and in expressive contrast to the poor works which they can make therewith—*the moon and the stars, which thou hast founded.* If we would not account for the absence of the sun, by supposing the Psalm to have been composed for a night season, we may conceive with S. Schmidt among the older expositors, (quando suscipio coelum, prout illud interdiu apparet cum sole suo, noctu autem lunam) and Ewald among the more recent, that the Psalmist in the first member has his eye chiefly upon the sun, and then in the second specially describes the splendid appearance of the night-heavens; and this seems the more natural, particularly on account of the respect it carries to Gen. i., where, among the objects of creation, the sun holds so prominent a place. When the heavens are spoken of as proofs of the greatness of God, every one thinks first of the sun.

Ver. 4. *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* The designation אֱנוֹשׁ, which, according to its etymology, is *weak, frail,* is here used intentionally. Calvin: "The prophet means, that God's wonderful goodness is the more brightly displayed, in that he, the great Creator, whose omnipotence shines forth in the heavens, should crown so miserable and unworthy a creature with the highest honour, and enrich him with numberless treasures." In respect to God, whose almightiness and greatness as Creator is manifested by the heavens with their shining stars, man appears nothing more than a worm in the dust, undeserving of the least regard. What a wonderful display of love is it, then, that he should still have done so much for him, as is set forth in the following verses?—תִּפְקְדֶנּוּ *to visit.* Every manifestation of God for blessing or for punishment—which of the two must always be determined by the connection—appears as an act of

visitation by him. So, for example, Ruth i. 6, "The Lord *visited* his people to give them bread." In Gen. xviii. 13, the Lord promises, then personally present, that he would return about that time the following year to Abraham, and then would Sarah have a son. In ch. xxi. 1, the fulfilment of the promise is thus recorded, "and the Lord *visited* Sarah, as he had said;" hence, it is added, in words of like import, "and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken." The Lord appeared not *personally*, but invisibly in the fulfilment of his promise. From this and similar passages it is rendered manifest, that the commonly received signification of פקד in such a connection: to look on something or some one, is inadmissible. The expression testifies with great force of the religious consciousness, which apprehends God in every operation of his hand.—The commencement of David's prayer in 2 Sam. vii. 18, presents a striking resemblance to our verse, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast led me hitherto?" It is the same humility which vents its admiration here, upon the greatness of God's condescension to man in general, and there upon the greatness of his condescension to the Son of Jesse. The sentiment: what is man, what am I, is grounded in the deepest feelings of David's soul. In v. 5—8 it is further enlarged upon, how far God has thought upon man and visited him.

Ver. 5. *Thou makest him to want little of a Divine standing, thou crownest him with honour and glory.* Various expositors follow the Chaldee and the LXX. in rendering אלהים by *angels*. But this exposition has manifestly sprung from doctrinal considerations. In support of this meaning, one can only appeal to certain passages in which it has been so rendered on doctrinal grounds, or others not connected with the subject treated of, so that on these passages, reference is again made to the one before us. But there is *here* a special ground for rejecting this exposition, which was first pointed out by Deresor. The grace of God is here celebrated, according to which, he has given to man the sovereignty over the earth. But how could he be compared in this respect with angels, who possess no such sovereignty? Others expound: Thou hast made him only a little less than God. But there is a double objection to be made also to this exposition: 1. חסר according to it, must be taken in Pi. with מן in the sense of *making less than, to make inferior to*, which is against the usus loquendi. The verb signifies, in Piel,

to *make*, or *cause, to want*, and the noun connected with it by מן marks the object, in regard to which there is the want. So in the only place besides, where it does occur. Eccl. iv. 8, מטובה מחסר את־נפשי, "Deprive my soul of good;" comp. the adj. חָסֵר with מן of the thing in Eccl. vi. 2. Accordingly, the expression here תחסרהו מ", can only be rendered: Thou hast made him to want little of God. 2. It is not admissible to understand by אלהים here, precisely and exclusively the only true God. The passage would, in that case, be at variance with the view unfolded in Scripture, of the infinite distance between God and man, as that is so loftily expressed in this Psalm itself. The correct interpretation is the following: The Elohim expresses the abstract idea of Godhead. But where it is not made concrete by the article, it is not rarely used when something merely super-earthly is designed to be marked. (See my Treatise on the names of God in the Pent. in 2d vol. of Beitr. zur Einl. ins A. T.) Important in this point of view is the passage Zech. xii. 8, "The house of David shall be as Elohim, as the angel of the Lord," where the transition from "Elohim" to "the angel of the Lord," is put as an advance from the less to the greater. The idea of the Elohim sinks lowest in 1 Sam. xxviii. 13, where the witch of Endor says to Saul: "I saw Elohim ascending out of the earth." Here remains only the vague representation of a super-earthly, super-human power, which the woman perceives in an apparition, discovering itself in the world of sense. Now, applying this to the place before us, it shows, that the words, "Thou makest him want little of God," thou makest him well-nigh possess God, is correctly expounded by Calvin: Parum abesse eum jussisti a divino et cœlesti statu,—thou bestowest on him an almost super-earthly dignity.

It is still inquired, however, whether the comparison refers to *all* the privileges conferred by God on man, or only to something special. The latter is undoubtedly the right supposition. The discourse is of man's dignity only, in so far as the lordship over the earth has been given him by God. This is clear from the parallelism alone. God is praised in the second member, because he has conferred royal dignity on man. But still more does it appear so, from the following verses. These are only a further expansion of the present one. And in them, the subject handled throughout, has to do merely with the lordship of man over the earth, as the deputy of God. In his representa-

tion, the Psalmist has manifestly before his eye the passage in Genesis, in which man was installed by God, as lord of the earth. Hence, in what follows, we find in part a literal argument, comp. Gen. i. 26: "Let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, &c.," ver. 28, and especially ix. 2, "And the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air .... and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered;" which last passage has this in common with our verse, that in it also, a progress is made from the higher objects of lordship to the lower, while in Gen. i. the reverse order is observed. Our Psalm is properly the expression of the subjective feelings occasioned by this sovereign act on the part of God. But certainly, though the Psalm directly relates only to the supremacy of man over the earth, it still indirectly leads farther. This *particular* dignity of man is the result merely of his *general* endowment, of the general pre-eminence which he holds above all creatures of earth. In Genesis this is very obvious. It is *because* man bears God's image, that there the lordship of creation is given him. But, on the supposition that the Psalm treats *indirectly* upon the dignity of man generally, we have not exactly the same right which would derive from the Psalm a proof for the moral dignity of man, as remaining also after the fall, or rather notwithstanding the fall. We have already shown, that the Psalm brings to view, simply and alone, God's appointment and gift, and does not take into account what man has squandered of that, and brought to nothing. If this holds of the proper object, the lordship over the earth, it must also hold of that, which comes into consideration only as an antecedent ground of the former.

And with honour and glory thou crownest him, the common designations of kingly state and majesty, comp. Psalms xxi. 5, xlv. 3; Jer. xxii. 18; 1 Chron. xxix. 25. God has set up man upon earth as his deputy-king. It is, of course, to be understood, that every individual man is not represented here as God's depute and vicegerent, but only man at large. The fut. with vau conv. at the beginning, shows, that the making him to want, is a consequence of thought and care. That we must not translate: Thou *hast* made him to want, but, thou *makest* him to want, or, *and so* thou makest him, (comp. Ps. vii. 15,) appears

from the parallel תְּעַטְּרֵהוּ, thou *crownest* him. To the Psalmist, the action of God is not one limited to a period absolutely *past*, but one continued through all time, and independent of time. God daily crowns man anew. עִטֵּר, to *crown*, like all verbs of *clothing*, with a double accusative.

Ver. 6. *Thou makest him to have dominion over the work of thy hands, thou puttest all under his feet.* In Genesis, the corresponding phrase is רדה with ב, prop. to plant the foot on something, to tread, then to rule.

Ver. 7. *All sheep and oxen, and also beasts of the field.* צֹנָה =צאן, a flock made up of sheep and goats. The choice of the rare form is to be referred here to the poetical dialect. The form צֹאנָא, midway between the two, occurs in Num. xxxii. 24.

שָׁדַי, poetic form for שָׂדֶה, field, Ewald, p. 298.

Ver. 8. But thou hast not merely put land animals beneath his feet, or subjected them to his rule, thou hast added also the tenants of the air, and of the water, *the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatsoever passes through the paths of the sea.* The paths of the sea, as the Homer. ὑγρὰ κέλευθα. עֹבֵר is not precisely to be referred to דָּגִי, for then we should have expected the plural, but to the going through, whatsoever goes through; Eng. Trans.: *And whatsoever passeth*, beside fishes, the other inhabitants also of the sea, comp. Gen. i. 21. That what is here ascribed to man, belongs to him still in a certain degree, even since the fall, as is implied in the frequent use of the future denoting the present, is shown, not only by Gen. ix. 2, but also by daily experience. No creature is so strong, so savage, so alert, but that man, though relatively one of the weakest creatures, in process of time becomes its master: comp. Jas. iii. 7. Nevertheless, there is a vast difference in this respect between *before* and *since* the fall. Before that event, the obedience of all creatures toward the appointed vicegerent of God, was a spontaneous one; after it, his subjects revolted against *him*, as he against *his* Lord. He must maintain against them, as against the resisting earth, a hard conflict, must on all hands employ art and cunning, and though, on the *whole*, he remains conqueror in this warfare, yet, in particulars, he has to suffer many defeats.

Ver. 9. *Jehovah, our Lord, how glorious is thy name in all the earth.* These words are not a simple repetition of those in ver. 1. *There* they contained a general expression of praise to

God on account of the glory accruing to him on earth, by means of his manifestation in the heavens. *Here* they refer to the great proof of his glory, which God has given in his condescension and goodness toward man.

PSALM IX.

God's righteousness is praised, in that he has assisted his people, and humbled their ungodly enemies, ver. 1—6. From what God has *done*, a conclusion is drawn as to what he *is*, righteous, and an helper to the oppressed, ver. 7—13. From the consciousness of what the Lord had formerly done, and what he is, the Psalmist, or rather the people in whose name he speaks, raise the prayer that he would graciously assist them, as heretofore, against all their other and still unsubdued enemies, who threatened them with destruction, ver. 13, 14. They receive the assurance of an acceptable hearing, ver. 15, 17, and conclude with the hope, that God will verify his word, ver. 18, 19, and with the prayer, that he would do so, ver. 19, 20. The opinion of Koester, that the author has observed a six-membered strophe, is not well founded. To secure that, we should need to divide what belongs to one part, and throw together what belongs to different ones.

The superscription attributes the Psalm to David, and no weight is due to the reasons which have been alleged to the contrary. Even by critics like Hitzig the authorship of David is admitted, both of this and the next Psalm. In support of this might be mentioned the rough and abrupt style, the archaisms, and many traits in common with those Psalms which are certainly David's. The precise time, however, in the life of David to which the Psalm is to be referred cannot be determined; for nothing more definite can be learned from the Psalm itself than, 1. That it must have been composed after Zion had become the sanctuary of the nation, by the removal thither of the ark of the covenant,—the Lord being spoken of in ver. 11, as "dwelling in Zion;" and, 2. That it was composed at a time when some of the external enemies had been conquered, and while others were still threatening danger. But, in such a position, David was ever and anon placed through the whole of his life, as indeed, generally with God's faithful people upon earth, the church

militant, the words, "I will praise the Lord with my whole heart," are constantly succeeded by "have mercy upon me, O Lord." The Psalm, besides, may be fully explained without any more exact historical reference. The matter is so general, that one presently feels himself obliged to take up the supposition of David's having at first penned the Psalm for the use of the people, when pressed with danger from foreign adversaries. There is nothing to set against this supposition, if we refer the first part, ver. 1—12, not to any particular transaction, but to all the deliverances in general which God had granted to his people. The sacred penman makes grateful remembrance of this, that, by such a recognition of the past, he might render God more inclined to listen to the prayer which follows. The view now taken contributes much to make the Psalm appear in its true light. Especially does it serve to make the general bearing of the entire first part clear. The relation of this part to the second has been very much misunderstood by De Wette. He conceives that it only contained the hope, that the Lord would subdue the enemies, confidently expressed. But we only need to consider the representation somewhat more closely, in order to see that it expresses, not hope for help to be afforded, but thanksgiving for benefits already conferred. The Psalmist beginning in such a way, may just be regarded as opening the gate into the house. De Wette himself is obliged to admit that "the Psalm certainly stands in this respect alone." Here, and in a multitude of other Psalms, thanks and praise are offered up before prayer on a double account. The *giver* will be more disposed to bestow new gifts when he sees that those already conferred are kept in grateful recollection. A *spirit of thankfulness* is one of the marks by which the family of God is distinguished from the world. He who cannot from the heart give *thanks* shall *beg* in vain. The *receiver* raises himself more easily to the hope of future kindnesses, when he throws himself back on the remembrance of former benefits derived from the giver. The foundation of despair is always ingratitude. The false supposition of De Wette is occasioned by another just as false, according to which the first part is made to express thanks (by anticipation) only for a single deliverance, notwithstanding the "all thy wonders," in ver. 1, and the still more decidedly contradictory words in ver. 5, "thou rebukest the heathen."

The relation which David had in view when he composed this

Psalm for public use, was that of the church of God to its foreign enemies. We must not regard it as an objection to this, that these are simply designated the wicked, those who forget God, while the Israelites appear as the righteous, the meek. The same appearance constantly recurs again,—that, namely, of one society, which has a truly divine principle, and, consequently, therewith a kernel of members, in whom this principle is embodied, without respect to the shell, which everywhere presents itself; and another society which has an ungodly principle, and in fellowship with which there can consequently be no kernel, the evil rather being there in its legitimate place, as the empire of good stands opposed to the empire of evil. Let us just look at the songs about the time of the reformation. They everywhere present, in contrast, the community of God and the community of antichrist. Who would conclude from this that the reformers reckoned every professing member of the Evangelic church truly pious, and every member of the Romish church utterly bad? But, in that case, it still was, according to their view, accidental, because not involved in the idea and principle, if in the former any unrighteous person was found, and in the latter any righteous. Then, it is also to be taken into account, that, in the relation of Israel to the heathen, the goodness of the cause was also on the side of the former, who, humanly considered, were unjustly oppressed. In this point of view Habakkuk justly asks of God, i. 13, "Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" The two together, the internal righteousness of the kernel, and the external righteousness of the cause, gave a solid ground of confidence to the prayer for deliverance out of the hand of the heathen. It may also be considered how entirely analogous the language was with ourselves during the war for freedom.

In opposing De Wette, who would throw this into the large class of plaintive Psalms, Claus has suffered himself to fall into an entirely false view of it. He maintains that the Psalm possesses no element of prayer, but is wholly occupied with matter of thanksgiving and praise. He is thus obliged to take up the unnatural position, in which he is certainly preceded by many of the older expositors, that ver. 13 only introduces, in direct terms, the cry of the miserable, which was already heard; which is

contradicted, however, by the conclusion of the Psalm, where there is also a prayer, showing that the evil was still not altogether disposed of. The structure of our Psalm is quite analogous to that of Psalm xviii., xl., lxviii., and to many others, in which the deliverance already obtained is first expressly described, and then, upon the ground of that, are raised the hope and prayer. It is certainly the case that the feeling of gratitude for the aid already received is here the predominant one, and on that account the prayer here is shorter, supplanted in a manner by the confidence of being heard. Hence we are not to think of such times as the exile, when the pain is much more severely felt, and the conflict is more violent.

That the Psalmist speaks not in his own person, and of what he himself had either obtained or wished to obtain, but in the name of the church and of the deliverance granted to it, or wished for by it, is clear from the designation of the object of the Divine care, as "the afflicted," ver. 12, "the meek," in ver. 18, "those who know the name of the Lord and seek him," in ver. 10. Consequently, what Hitzig alleges in support of the Davidic authorship of the Psalm, that the author must, from ver. 3, 4, 13, have been a king, vanishes of itself. For this allegation rests upon the supposition that the author spoke in his own person.

The position, that the Psalm does not refer to the personal relations of the Psalmist, but from the first was composed in the name of the whole body, and designed for its use, is supported, not only by the absence of all definite historical references, to which we have already adverted, but also by the whole tone of the Psalm, which evidently betrays the situation of the author to have been merely a supposititious one. We also discover nothing here of that inwardness and liveliness of feeling, which the Psalmist displays when referring to his own personal relations, or even to the community at large, when a precise situation of that was in question, a special necessity which oppressed it, or a special deliverance which it experienced.

In the LXX., which the Vulgate follows, this Psalm is united to the following one. Many expositors approve of this, resting on the similarity of subject, and the want of a superscription to Psalm x. We shall return more at length to the matter in our introduction to that Psalm.

The words על־מות לבן in the superscription are not easy.

Winer, De Wette, and others, read the two first as one word, and point עַלְמוּת; which is used at the beginning of Psalm xlvi. for marking the tune. לבן they render: for Ben, or the Benites. A Ben is mentioned in 1 Chron. xv. 18 as a master-singer. It is to be alleged against this, however, that the common reading and punctuation have on their side the preponderance of external authorities; and still more, that we are then driven to the unjustifiable necessity of supplying על before עלמות. Claus gets rid of this difficulty only by introducing a greater one. He would read עַלְמוּת. But this word, which never actually occurs, can only signify *virginity*, and from this to make a virgin-song, or virgin-piece = music-piece of the character על עלמות, is not quite intelligible. Finally, the בן should then have been without the article, an objection which is not of itself indeed quite conclusive, but which still gives important confirmation to the others, as the placing of the article before proper nouns belongs to very rare exceptions; see Ewald, p. 568. If, with others, we consider the words as taken from an old song, after the air of which our Psalm was to be sung, still they needed not have formed exactly the beginning of this song, but only to have occurred somewhere in it. Songs are not always named from their commencing words. Thus David's song of lamentation upon the death of Saul and Jonathan, in 2 Sam. i. 8, is named *the bow*, קשת, because mention is made in it of the bow. It is very natural, then, to suppose that this old song was a plaintive one on the death of a son, *dying to the son*, either with some such verb as the following, *has happened*, or perhaps as a mere circumlocution for the stat. constr., rendered necessary from the circumstance that the first noun must be an indefinite one, the second a definite one, not *the* dying, but dying; see Ewald, p. 583. מות is found as inf. nominasc. also in Psalm xlviii. 14, comp. Gen. xxv. 32. But the whole view labours under the difficulty, that for such a pointed reference to a song, after the air of which a Psalm was to be sung, is destitute of all analogy in the superscriptions; in every other place, where this hypothesis has been advanced, it has turned out, on closer investigation, to be groundless. The true mode of explanation was hit upon by Grotius, who supposed that לבן was put by a transposition of letters for נבל, and that the superscription marks

the object of the Psalm. But he erred in this that he took נבל as a proper name, *upon the dying of Nabal*—a subject to which the Psalm could not possibly refer—instead of: *upon the dying of the fool.* This error being rectified, the superscription accords precisely with the contents, the destruction of the fool (comp. Ps. xiv. 1) is actually the subject of the Psalm. Precisely corresponding words are used in ver. 5, "thou hast destroyed the wicked;" comp. also in ver. 3, "they shall perish at thy presence," in ver. 6, "their memorial is perished," in ver. 12, "when he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them," and in ver. 17, "the wicked shall be turned into hell." Analogous examples of an enigmatical designation by a change of letters, are Sesach for Babel, and the Leb Kamai for Kasdim in Jeremiah, both according to the Alphabet Atbash.—See on this and similar enigmatical designations, Christology, Part ii. p. 92 ss. Such an enigmatical description of the subject is peculiarly appropriate in the superscriptions of the Psalms, and finds in them, as our exposition will show, a great number of analogies. It derives special support from 2 Sam. iii. 33, where David laments "Died Abner as the fool dieth," כמות נבל, comp. also 1 Sam. xxv. 38, "And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal that he died." Though the word is here to be taken as an adjective, yet it would seem that David had his eye upon that circumstance, which he viewed in the light of a prediction, comp. 1 Sam. xxv. 26, where Abigail said, "let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal."

In the first strophe, ver. 1—6, the Psalmist first declares his purpose of praising God; in ver. 1, 2, then in ver. 3, he mentions the overthrow which, through God, had been inflicted on the enemies as the ground and occasion of this purpose, and in ver. 4—6, lays the foundation of what he had said in the general, in this respect, by an enlargement on some particulars.

Ver. 1. *I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, I will show forth all thy marvellous works.* The words, "with my whole heart," serve at once to show the greatness of the deliverances wrought for the Psalmist, and to distinguish him from the hypocrites—the coarser, who praise the Lord for his goodness merely with the lips, and the more refined, who praise him with just half their heart, while they secretly ascribe the deliverance more to themselves than to him. *All thy wonders,* the marvellous tokens of thy grace. The Psalmist shows by this term, that

he recognised them in all their greatness. Where this is done, there the Lord is also praised with the whole heart. *Half-heartedness*, and the depreciation of Divine grace, go hand in hand. The ב is the ב instrum. The heart is the instrument of praise, the mouth only its organ.

Ver. 2. *I will be glad and rejoice in thee; I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.* Many expositors render בְךָ by, *upon thee*, upon thy wonderful doings. But the ב after a verb of joy always denotes the person or object wherein the affection reposes. It is not a mere joy *before* God, but a joy *in* God. To sing to the name of God is as much as to sing of his glorious deeds (Venema: Deum factis illustrem), for the name is the product of the deeds. The *Most High* is used descriptively, because God had manifested himself as uncontrolled ruler over all earthly things.

Ver. 3. *When mine enemies are turned back*—the ב points to the occasion of the praise, the circumstances which had called it forth, its cause—*they shall stumble and perish at thy presence*, not human power and might have compassed their overthrow, but thy indignation, which they could not withstand. This is poetically expressed, as if the enemies had been thrown to the ground by the glance of God's fiery countenance. מִן is the מִן causæ. פָּנִים elsewhere, has the sense of *angry face*, only from the connection; it never has this, as many expositors maintain, of itself. The use of the fut. is to be explained from the lively nature of the representation. The Psalmist sees the downfall of his enemies taking place before his eyes. With this De Wette could not sympathise, and so he thinks that in this verse he finds a support to this false view, that ver. 1—6 expresses hope in regard to the future deliverance. In the further enlargement that is given in ver. 4—6, the discourse assumes a milder character, and there the preterite is constantly used.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast made my judgment and right.* The *for* marks the relation of ver. 4—6 to ver. 3. What has been said in general is confirmed by particulars. מִשְׁפָּט and דִּין both denote, according to many expositors, causam forensem. *Thou hast made*, q. d. thou dost determine, or decide. The idea of a favourable decision necessarily lies enclosed in this, since God, as the righteous one, if he gives judgment upon any matter whatever, can give nothing but a righteous judgment. But this exposition is contradicted by the fact, that the expressions

עשה משפט and עשה דין, are always used only of a decision *in favour of a righteous cause*, while, according to it, they might be used just as well of a decision against the ungodly. Comp. 1 Kings viii. 45, 49; Deut. x. 18; Psalm cxl. 12. These parallel passages show that the two nouns must be taken rather in the sense of judgment and right (דין in this sense, Prov. xx. 8; Isa. x. 2), that which belongs to me, what is due to my righteous cause. This exposition also suits better than the first in the parallelism. *Thou satest on the throne as righteous judge.* The verb should here, according to many, be taken in the sense of *putting himself*, on account of the prep. ל following; for that ל is not put for ב, is to be taken for granted. But there is nothing to prevent us from abiding by the common and only certain meaning of the verb. For the ל can just as little be taken in the sense of אל, as these interpreters suppose, than in that of ב. Therefore ישב לכסא, to sit, belonging to the throne, is all one as to the meaning with to sit upon the throne.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked.* גער *to rebuke*, marks, when used of God, the infliction of the punishment, without receiving another sense than the word naturally imports. The punishment is considered as a sermo realis. The גוים shows that the thanksgivings do not refer to a single heathenish nation. *Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever*, thou hast so completely extirpated them that their memory has perished with them.

Ver. 6. *The enemy, finished are the destructions for ever, and thou hast destroyed cities, their memorial is perished with them.* The pron. sep. המה is used with emphasis, after the suff. had just been employed. It has perished, even its memory, or more exactly: their memory has perished, even it (has perished). It points out the great contrast between the proud expectations of the enemies, their apparently invincible strength, and their now entire annihilation; their memory is gone, the memory of those who, in their supercilious pride, and in their actual possession of all human means of help, fancied themselves lords of the whole earth. So also at the beginning stands emphatically the nom. absol. *the enemy*—he who thought himself so secure, so invincible, who appeared destined to lasting prosperity. תמם in the sense of being *completed, finished*, is found also in Jos. v. 8; 1 Kings vi. 22; vii. 22; Psalm lxiv. 6. While תמר marks the

entireness of the desolation which reigns in the land of the enemies, לנצח expresses the perpetuity of it. Under the *destructions* we are to think, as the parallel, *cities*, shows, and the word itself, indeed, of prostrated fortresses and dwellings. In the verb "thou hast destroyed," the address is directed to God, as in ver. 5, throughout. As in the first and last clause, the desolation is merely described by itself, it is necessary that the author of it be pointed to in the middle, the desolation being here viewed only as one wrought by God. The second clause stands equally related here to the first and third, just as in ver. 3 the third does to the first and second. Another exposition renders: "*the enemies, their devastations have an end.*" But it is to be objected, that חרבה never signifies *devastation* in an active sense, but only *destructions, desolations*. Apart from the use of the language, according to which the word is never found in the former signification, either in the masculine or feminine gender, the inadmissibility of that signification is evident also from the form. The Segol-forms with מ serve only to express intransitive or passive ideas, see Ewald, p. 228. As the verb signifies only to be desolated, never to desolate, so also the noun must mean desolation in the passive sense. The parallelism too: "thou hast destroyed cities," tends to show that the subject of discourse here is the ruin of hostile habitations; as also the assertion, that their "memory is perished," indicates a total destruction of them. The three verbs אבד—נתשת—תמו stand in exact parallelism. Now, if the affairs of the enemies are described by the two last, as going to perdition, the same explanation must be held also to be the only correct one in regard to the first. Ewald, following Venema, would take האויב as the subject: the enemies are completed as desolations for ever, *i.e.* the enemies would be altogether perpetual desolations. But desolations do not suit persons; and how little the parallelism favours this exposition may be gathered from this alone, that Ewald sees himself under the necessity of taking ערים in the sense of צים, adversaries. Quite arbitrary, also, is the exposition of Maurer: O enemy, there is an end to the ruins and the cities which thou hast destroyed. For the address in the first part is throughout directed to the Lord, and it could not be said that the cities destroyed by the enemies have an end. Finally, the exposition of De Wette: The enemies are gone, desolations (are) for ever, does violence to the accents which separate תמו

from האויב, and connect it with חרבות; the verb in the plural, standing in the middle between a noun in the singular and a noun in the plural, is more naturally joined with the latter than the former; according to the analogy of נתשת and the אבד, the תמו also is to be referred, not to the enemies themselves, but to somewhat belonging to them; lastly, that the words לנצח חרבות, form a period by themselves, with the omission of the verb, is against the analogy of the other members of the verse, and of ver. 4 and 5, where verbs are constantly placed in the preterite. The contents of ver. 5 and 6 suit most exactly to the Amalekites (without being confined to them), who, after the victories gained over them by Saul and David, altogether disappear from the theatre of history. That the Psalmist thought chiefly on them, derived from their fate the strongest colours, with which he delineates the overthrow of the enemies of God's people, is probable from the reference which the expressions, "thou hast put out their name for ever," and "their memorial is perished," seem to carry to Ex. xvii. 14, "I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek," and Deut. xxv. 19, "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek." Comp. also Num. xxiv. 20, "Amalek is the first of the heathen, but his end is destruction," עדי אבד. The representation, however, has also its verification in the subjection of the Canaanites, and in the victories of David over the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and other nations.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord is enthroned for ever, he has prepared his throne for judgment,* or for holding judgment. The Psalmist strengthens his faith through the conviction, confirmed by those deliverances, that God is the eternal ruler and judge of the world; that however the rage of the ungodly may swell, they still can never prevail to push God from his exalted throne, on which he governs, with almighty power and perfect righteousness, the world, and vindicates the cause of the oppressed. He therefore derives the general from the particular, from its individual operations he forms the idea, from the history he deduces the instruction, so that the overthrow leads the way to prayer. The futures are to be translated in the present, and mark the continuous action.

Ver. 8. *And he judges the world in righteousness, he ministers judgment to the people in uprightness.*

Ver. 9. *And the Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed.* וידי

might be taken as an optative. The Psalmist would then express a wish that God would be to him what he had been described in the preceding context. Through this wish he would make known his satisfaction in what is divine, as if it were his own. However, as in poetry, the abbreviated form stands in place of the common one, we may also translate in agreement with the preceding and following context: And there is משגב, a high place, where one is secure from the attacks of one's enemies. The remark of Venema is not to be overlooked: "David is the first, as far as I have noticed, who, by this term, calls God a high place." The ground of David's predilection for this designation of God he finds in the circumstance of David's having often experienced safety in such places, when fleeing from Saul. דך from דכך to crush, an oppressor. *A refuge for times in trouble.* Times in trouble are times when one is in trouble, comp. Psalm x. 1. In this verse, also, faith concludes from that which God has done, what he is and will do. How he had shown himself during the past, in a series of actions, as a refuge for the oppressed, was declared in verses 3—6; therefore such is his character generally, and such also in this respect must he prove himself in regard to the present oppression.

Ver. 10. *And they that know thy name shall put their trust in thee, i.e.* ought to do so, have a sufficient ground for it. To know the name of God is to know him according to his historical manifestation, as that was delineated in ver. 3—6. For the name of God is the product of this manifestation. When one hears him named, then one calls to remembrance all that he has done. The name is the focus in which all the rays of his actions meet. *For*—this shows thy name, this establishes thy historical character, which can only result from thy name—*thou hast not forsaken them that seek thee, O Lord.*

Ver. 11. This and the following verse form the conclusion, the epiphony and resumé of the whole first part, or of the two first strophes, in which it has been described how the Lord has acted, then how he is: therefore sing. *Sing praises to the Lord who is throned upon Zion*—prop. the enthroner of Zion, to whom Zion belongs. This designation is here chosen because God had given theocratic help, had acted as King of Israel, as guardian of the nation, and in that capacity had been described. *Declare among the people his doings,* tell among the heathen how gloriously he

has helped and still helps his people. Rightly Calvin: "Although this were substantially to preach to deaf ears, yet David would show, by this form of expression, that the limits of Judea were too narrow for composing that everlasting kingdom to the praise of God.

Ver. 12. *For the avenger of blood is remembered by him, he forgetteth not the cry of the afflicted.* *For*—this is the result of the deeds with which the Psalmist had just been occupying himself—the Lord, who leaves not innocent blood to be shed with impunity upon the earth, punishes the enemies for the cruelty which they practised upon his people. In regard to the preterites of the verb, which are rendered by the present, the remark of Ewald, *Small Gr.* § 263, specially applies: "General truths which are made manifest by experience, and have already shown and proved themselves to be such, are described in the perfect." The suffix in אתם refers to the plural דמים. God appears to have forgotten the blood of the slain so long as he leaves the murderer unpunished, he calls it to remembrance when he punishes it. The sense is weakened if we refer it to the following עניים, and it is also opposed to the parallelism. God remembers blood, he forgets not the cry of the afflicted. In both members it is announced through what the vengeance of God is called forth against the evil-doers. *Blood* is not here to be taken, with the generality of expositors, as synecdochically comprehending all sorts of misdeeds, but the Psalmist naturally mentions the highest pitch of hostile malice, being one peculiarly fitted to draw forth the Divine vengeance. A more special reason for this manner of expression is to be found in the unquestionable reference to Gen. ix. 5, where God designates himself the avenger of blood, "I will require your blood:" he, who in his word announces himself to be the avenger of blood, concerns himself about the facts of experience. (Venema: "Which character God had already appropriated to himself in the time of Abel, whose blood cried for vengeance, and declared that he would perpetually sustain it in his government of the world," Gen. ix.) For עניים the Masoretic marginal reading is ענויים, whose vowels, as usual, stand in the text. The marginal reading is here also to be rejected. It has only arisen from the feeling that a moral quality, humility, is necessary to the hearing of prayer. But it is overlooked that not only does ענו constantly retain its proper signification (see upon the never-failing

distinction between עני, *afflicted, miserable,* and ענו, *humble,* Christol. P. ii. p. 126, ss.; but here also from the connection itself there can be no doubt that only persons, as innocently suffering, are discoursed of. The mention of a cry and of blood also points to the idea of suffering, and not of humility. And even the reading in the text is confirmed by the following עניי, in ver. 13, which carries the closest reference to the word here: God forgets not the cry of the afflicted,—be merciful to me, O Lord, *behold* my affliction.

Ver. 13. The prayer is now raised on the foundation laid in the preceding context. Luther remarks: "In the same way do all feel and speak who have already overcome some tribulation and misfortune, and are once more oppressed, tormented, and plagued. They cry and beg that they may be delivered." This is unquestionably the right view of this and the next verse. *Be gracious to me, O Lord, behold my affliction of my haters, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death.* The form חָנֵנִי is made as if the verb were a regular one. According to the analogy of the verbs עע it ought to have been חָנְנִי. Such forms are merely poetical, Ewald, p. 476. Poetry ever strives to give an outward expression of its internal separation from common life. *Of my haters, i.e.,* proceeding from them, done to me. מן marks the lifter up. Not so good is the exposition of those who suppose here a constr. praegnans: behold my affliction and free me from my haters. There are certainly to be found similar constructions. So, for example, is to be understood 2 Sam. xviii. 19, "the Lord hath judged him out of the hand of his enemies." But still the passage here is not perfectly analogous. The *seeing* is less practical than the *judging,* and even than the *hearing* in Psalm xxii. 21; the helping is not implied here, as it is there, in the expression itself, (it is to be observed that in Psalm xxii. not שמע, but ענה is used,) and is merely a consequence of the seeing. *Thou, my lifter up,* thou, whose constant part it is to lift me up. Death or the realm of death, sheol, is represented under the image of a deep, firmly barred prison-house, from which no one can deliver himself. The greatest distress and misery are here, therefore, denoted by a sinking down into sheol. That God is a helper in distress, begets confidence towards him in particular seasons of distress. The words briefly comprehend what, in the first part, had been expressly delineated, and, con-

sequently, point to the relation subsisting between this strophe and the two preceding ones, the connection between the prayer and the thanksgiving and praise.

Ver. 14. As a reason for the granting of his prayer for further deliverance, the Psalmist represents that he would thereby have occasion for still more praising God. In this verse is brought out one of the two ends mentioned for pouring forth thanks and praise. It substantially rests on the supposition that thanks and praise are acceptable to God. *That I may show forth all thy praise*, all thy wonderful doings, *in the gates of the daughter of Zion.* That we must not, with many expositors, the last of whom, Claus, render לְמַעַן by *on this account*, we have seen on a former occasion. *In the gates*,—expositors commonly remark, —were the assemblies and judgments held; hence, in the gates is as much as in the public meetings. But this explanation is untenable. God's praise is not to be celebrated in the gates, amid the throng of worldly business, but in the temple. The expression is to be regarded as simply meaning *within.* It is confessedly often used in that sense in the Pentateuch, see the Lexicons. The former interpretation is opposed also by the gates of death in the preceding verse, which comprehended the whole region of the dead. The daughter of Zion is Jerusalem. The Gen. is to be understood precisely as in the words, פרת נהר, the flood of the Euphrates, for, Euphrates. So, ירושלם בת, בת בבל, daughter of Jerusalem, daughter of Babylon, should rather be, daughter Jerusalem, daughter Babylon, &c. Words which are very commonly coupled together, generally on that account receive the form of the stat. constr., although, according to the idea, they should be regarded as standing in apposition, Ewald, p. 579. Cities were poetically personified as maidens or daughters, and that so frequently that the designation sometimes found its way also into prose. The form תְּהִלָּתַיִךְ cannot be plural; this must have been תְּהִלָּתֵךְ; neither can it be singular, for then the Jod must have been awanting. It appears that the vowels have originally belonged to a Kri, which had afterwards been dropt from the margin. The Masorites would have had the singular instead of the rarer plural, to be considered as the reading, which they would also recommend in Ps. lxxi. 4, cvi. 2.

Ver. 15. The fourth strophe containing the internal assurance

of being heard.—*The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made; in the net which they hid, is their own foot taken.* That the praeterites refer to an *ideal* past, denote that, which not the corporeal eye, but faith saw to have existed, and that we must hence not suppose, with most expositors, that the Psalmist points in his praise, to a deliverance actually past, appears from v. 17, ss., where is continued, as matter of hope in the future, what is here represented as already experienced.

Ver. 16. The Lord makes himself known, he holds judgment. The latter words denote the form of the making known, express that through which he is made known, wherein he manifests himself. It is quite unnecessary to bring the two members into a closer relation to each other, to make the second verbally dependant on the first. The abrupt mode of expression is in perfect accordance with the joyful emotions of the Psalmist. *In the work of his own hands,*—in the snares prepared by himself, and laid for others,—*the wicked is snared,* comp. Ps. vii. 15, 16. נוקש is the particle in Kal. of the verb נקש, in Piel, to *ensnare,* in Kal. *to be ensnared.* As this verb is also found elsewhere, there is no reason for taking the word here as an irregular form of the praet. in Niph. from יקש, where, instead of the Zere, Patach should have been used.—הגיון is found in three other places besides this. In two of them, Ps. xix. 14, Lam. iii. 61, the sense, *musing, reflection,* is certain, and generally recognised. "But this established meaning is also the only suitable one in the third passage, Ps. xcii. 3—*musing upon the harp,* is a meditative, feeling exercise thereupon, corresponding to the silent praise in Ps. lxv. 1,—and to substitute with Gesenius, De Wette, and others, the sense of *loud tune,* or *music,* without any just ground, is quite arbitrary. Now, if we apply this signification also here, the word contains a call for reflection, one most appropriate to the elevation of the period in which the assurance of being heard comes into view. The *Selah,* pause, makes a very suitable conclusion. The music must cease, to afford space for calm meditation.

Ver. 17. The fifth strophe. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, all the nations that forget God.* The transition from the pret. to the fut., which is the rather to be noticed, as Higgaion and Selah intervene between the two, may be explained in this way, that the lively emotions which took possession of the Psalmist, when he became assured of acceptance, have now subsided, so

that he continues his discourse in a more calm and ordinary manner; or, perhaps, in ver. 15 and 16, the Psalmist, as out of himself, sees things with God's eye as *present*, while here he falls back to the common point of view, and *hope* consequently takes the place of *sight*.—שוּב never signifies *to turn one's self any how*, but always *to turn away, to turn back*, and this signification is quite suitable here also: They shall be turned away from the Psalmist, and thence to hell. Already was it remarked by J. D. Michaelis: Ceterum reditur quidem interdum a termino, ad quem ventum erat, sed ad alium, quam in quo quis antea fuerat, e. c. 2 Par. xviii. 25, Job i. 21. The ה in לִשְׁאוֹלָה, can only be held as superfluous by those who recognise no distinction between לְ and אֶל. There is a reference to ver. 13. The same God, who raises the righteous from the gates of sheol, drives the wicked down thither, as into their own place. In reference to "the forgetting of God," Venema remarks excellently: "Not in that sense, in which the Gentiles are said to be without God and his worship, which is common to them all, but rather in an emphatical one, as treading all law and righteousness beneath their feet, and manifesting, that they have thrown off all regard to God, the judge of the world, and the avenger of crime—that they have worn out and erased the thoughts and apprehensions of God, which are inscribed upon the consciences of men."

Ver. 18. *For the poor shall not always be forgotten, the hope of the meek shall not perish for ever.* In the second hemistich, the אֶל is to be supplied from the first. The Kri עֲנִיִּים for עֲנָיִים has first come from the false conviction of the Masorites, that the parallel אֶבְיוֹן requires a word, which does not denote a moral quality, but has respect to the outward condition. According to the connection, the needy is the poor and neglected righteous man, and the עֲנִיִּים are the suffering meek ones.

Ver. 19. The fifth strophe. The renewed prayer, different from the former, in so far as it springs from the confidence of being heard, (the Psalmist takes God at his word), while the former was uttered only upon the ground of a general confidence in God's grace.—*Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail; let the heathen be judged in thy sight.* The words, "Let not man prevail," (be strong) call attention to the internal opposition which exists in the present state of things, the contrast between the reality and the idea, which imperiously demands a compensation. That man, whose very name is weakness, (comp. the vin-

dication of the derivation of אנוש from אנש, to be weak, by Tholuck, Beitr. Z. Spracherkl. s. 61,) makes his power prevail, is so intolerable a quid pro quo, that God must necessarily lift himself up, in order to put it down. The use of the על is to be explained thus: The parties *stand* before the sitting judge, and so are raised above him.

Ver. 20. *Put fear into them, O Lord,* i. e. associate it with them as a companion, place it beside them, or appoint it for them. שות with ל exactly as in Ps. cxli. 13: Set a watch to my mouth. *To drive into,* or *lay on,* cannot be the meaning of the verb with ל. Some take מורה in the sense of *razor,* in which sense it occurs, Judg. xiii. 5, and elsewhere, and translate: Lay on them the razor. By this would then be denoted the greatest dishonour, for it is customary in the East, to let the beard grow, and to have no beard is counted a reproach. But this cannot, as we have said, be the meaning of the verb, and the expression has here, where all else is so simple, a forced and unnatural appearance. It is, therefore, better to take מורה as only a different manner of writing the word on the margin, מורא, *fear,* from ירא. ה often usurps the place of א, because the sound at the end is the same, and the number of words which end in ה, is much greater than those which have א. The Masorites, then, have only, as they have often done, placed the current for the rarer form.—*Let the heathen know that they are men,* weak, impotent creatures. The singular אנוש carries more emphasis than the plural—dying, feeble man, not God. The use of the singular shows, that in all numerical and other differences, the nature still remains the same.

PSALM X.

The Psalmist complains, that the Lord delivers up his people to the oppressions of proud, cruel, deceitful enemies, who forget God, v. 1—11. He calls upon him to withhold no longer his help from the innocent, and avenge himself and them on his despisers and their oppressors, and expresses his confident hope that this should be done, v. 12—15. He holds fast his assurance of being heard, and, with the eye of faith, sees the enemies annihilated, the meek redeemed, the offence removed, which had drawn from him the "wherefore," v. 16—18.

Though the Psalm has no superscription, yet its place among those which belong to David, renders it very probable that he was the author. At all events, the exceedingly compressed and difficult style, and the impress of originality, allowed even by De Wette, proves it to belong to an early age. The almost literal agreement in many passages between it and the preceding Psalm, which the superscription makes David's, would lead us to infer that this also must be his—comp. especially the peculiar phrase לעתות בצרה, in v. 1, which nowhere else occurs, with ix. 9, "Arise, O Lord," in v. 12 with ix. 20, "That the man of the earth may no more oppress," at the close with "let not man prevail," in ix. 19, the words "the heathen are perished," and "judge the fatherless and the oppressed," in v. 16 and 18, with "let the heathen be judged," in ix. 19, &c. These similarities, especially the first, conclude not merely for the identity of the author, but also for the circumstances being alike, in which both were composed. The rest show, that a still nearer connection has existed between the two Psalms, and that the older translators, such as the LXX. and Vulgate, who joined both together, did not do so without some reason. It is, first of all, remarkable, that this Psalm has not, like all those which immediately precede and follow, any superscription. It is still more remarkable, that Ps. ix. begins with א and Ps. x. closes with ת, nay, that through the two Psalms a certain alphabetical arrangement discovers itself, though it is not preserved throughout. In the rule every alternate verse begins with the letter of the alphabet next in order. This fact is not overthrown by a number of exceptions. For these are to be explained on the principle, that the external arrangement was subordinated to the sense, and hence sacrificed to it, where the one could not be adapted to the other. The same view also is supported by the manifest internal reference, in the words, "thou hidest thyself in times of trouble" in x. 1, to those in ix. 9, "The Lord is a refuge in times of trouble,"—a reference, to which the peculiar form of expression common to both passages, otherwise quite singular, points as with the finger, and by which Ps. x. proclaims itself to be a continuation of Ps. ix. But, on the other hand, it does not suit well to unite both Psalms precisely into one. An external ground against this exists in the division in the MSS., which certainly is not accidental, and an internal one, that the two Psalms are quite separate and cut off from each other. There

only remains, therefore, the supposition, that according to the design of the author, the two Psalms form one whole, divided into two parts—a circumstance which also occurs elsewhere, for example, in the relation of Ps. i. and ii., Ps. xlii. xliii. to each other. Amid the unquestionably great resemblance which the two Psalms present in reference to the object, situation, train of thought, and particular features, there still exists a threefold difference, not to be overlooked: 1. The help, which the Lord had already granted to his people, forms in Ps. ix. the ground, on which the prayer is raised, whereas in Ps. x. what serves this purpose, is a lengthened representation of the mournful state of things, as loudly calling for Divine interference, of the superciliousness of the ungodly, which had been nourished by their impunity, and of the sufferings of the righteous. This parallelism of the two sections, Ps. ix. 1—13, and x. 1—11, is of importance for coming to a right judgment on the first. It shows, that the thanks rendered in it have no meaning by themselves, but that the recognition of that, which the Lord had formerly done, was only designed to ensure the fulfilment of the word, "ask in faith nothing doubting." 2. In Psalm ix. the reference to the heathen is decidedly prominent. On the contrary, in Ps. x. the heathen are only once thought of, in ver. 16, and the author, besides, is throughout concerned simply with "the wicked." 3. In Ps. ix. the Psalmist introduces the people of the Lord saying, "I will praise the Lord," &c., giving occasion thereby to the groundless supposition of many, that it refers to the personal relations of the Psalmist; but here, on the other hand, he speaks always of the meek, the afflicted, &c. in the third person.—That David composed this Psalm, not in reference to any particular event of his life, but to the end that the people might avail themselves of it in all seasons of distress, was remarked even by Kimchi; and if this supposition had been kept steadily in view here, as also in the preceding Psalm, confirmed as it is by the entire matter, a host of fruitless conjectures might have been spared, such, for example, as Hitzig has brought forward, who has decidedly acknowledged too the penmanship of David. No trace is anywhere to be found of an individual reference, and the passage v. 8—10, which might be pointed to as having most of an historical appearance, conclusively shows that the individual, where it seems to be introduced, is only a poetical personification. The individual representation is also excluded here, as in Ps. ix. by the

use of the alphabetical arrangement. This is never found in the personal Psalms.

Ver. 1. *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?* Why standest thou as an indifferent spectator in my contest with the enemy, and dost not hasten to my rescue? The *why* is, in circumstances like the present, an evidence of lively faith. Only he who possesses it, and, with it, a firm conviction of God's omnipotence and righteousness, will consider it as a monstrous thing, and one that cannot continue, that God should not assist his suffering people. *Thou coverest in times of trouble.* תעלים rightly by Calvin: connives, to which must be supplied *eyes*. The expression stands in full, Lev. xx. 4, 1 Sam. xii. 3, and in many other places. See upon the omission of the *members* in current phrases, Ewald, p. 190. When God does not assist his people, he appears to have turned away his face from them, to have covered his eyes; comp. v. 14. See on Psalm ix. 9, for the expression, "times of distress or trouble." The supposition that times in distress, without anything farther, stands for times of distress, is opposed by the whole character of the Psalm, which is very concise. We have already shown, that the words carry an external, as well as internal, reference to Ps. ix. 9. There the Psalmist had obtained from the earlier manifestations of God the sure result, that he is a refuge in times when one is in distress. He here takes up the inference from this result, and asks God, wherefore his actions stand in opposition to that. The לעתות בצרה is to be viewed as if it were furnished with marks of quotation, and תעלים should have the stress laid on it, as forming the contrast to משגב.

Ver. 2. *Through the pride of the wicked the poor is inflamed, they are taken in the plots which they have devised.* דלק, in Heb. as well as in the cognate dialects, has the sense of to *burn*. Here the burning, or setting on fire, denotes the fury, (comp. כעס indignation, in v. 14,) which so often appears under the image of fire—comp. for example, Ps. xxxvii. 1, "Be not inflamed against the evil-doers," Ps. xxxix. 3, "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned," Isa. xxx. 27, "burning his anger," Ezek. xxi. 3, בערים, burning, for angry, raging. Against Gesenius and De Wette, according to whom, to *burn* must here mean to *be in anguish*, we place the fact, that anguish is never so designated in Hebrew, and the notions of Stier, who would have דלק to signify the heat of oppression, and of Hitzig,

who translates: is burned, are refuted by the remark of J. H. Michaelis, that the word "denotes an active heat, such as is in fire, not passive, like that in matter." The exposition of Sachs and others: through the pride of the wicked he persecutes the poor, does not suit the parallelism so well, can bring only one passage, Lam. iv. 19, in support of דלק in this signification with the accusative, while elsewhere it has this signification only with אחרי, which also is properly required, and indeed unless a low style of language were used, it would scarcely do to say, to burn after any one, for, hotly to persecute. Most expositors explain the second clause: they, the poor, are caught or taken through the plans which those, the wicked, have devised; and this exposition is to be preferred, from the parallelism and connection, to the other: they, the wicked, shall be caught or taken in the wiles which they have devised, although the latter can also refer for support to parallel passages, such as Ps. vii. 13; ss., ix. 16.

Ver. 3. *For the wicked extols the desire of his soul, and he who makes gain blesses, despises the Lord.* The *for* marks not so much the relation of this verse to the preceding one, as the relation of the whole representation in ver. 3—11 to ver. 1 and 2. The brief intimations which the Psalmist had given in these two verses, regarding the posture of things, he grounds by a farther elucidation in ver. 3—11. כי has precisely the same force in Psalm ix. 4, and this agreement also is a proof of the closer connection between the two Psalms. The first clause is commonly expounded: For the wicked boasts of his desire. But this rendering is inadmissible, as הלל never signifies *to boast, to be proud,* least of all in Psalm lvi. 4, where its object is coupled with it, nor in Ps. xliv. 8. We must rather translate: The wicked extols the desire of his heart. The על stands then quite appropriately as a designation of the object, on which the extolling is raised—its substratum. When the wicked ventures to laud in public the shameful lusts of his heart, as what need not shun the light, this is the highest degree of depravity, and betokens, at the same time, how secure he has become in consequence of his impunity, how sad the condition of the poor, how much occasion there is for such to fear, how necessary it hence is for God to interfere, and what reason there was for the *why* in the first verse. So also Ewald: "he gives praise, not as is due to Jehovah, but to his own lust," comp. Hab. i. 11—16. The second clause can only be rendered: *whosoever makes gain,*

blesses, despises God. בצע is correctly explained by Venema: quæstum faciens per fas et nefas. The bad sense lies not in the word itself, but in the connection. The object of the lamentation is, that whosoever just makes gain, without farther consideration, blesses God for it, without ever thinking, perhaps, whether the gain is a righteous one or not. *Despises God.* This indicates the highest state of impiety. For any one who possesses any moral feeling, will say, "Blessed be God," only when he has obtained a righteous gain,—comp. Zech. xi. 5, which passage clearly shows, that God is to be considered as the object of blessing. This expression, therefore, "he despised God," occupies the proper place. Such a blessing of God is, indeed, the highest kind of contempt toward him. For, as Calvin justly remarks: Whosoever believes that God will be his judge, it will be found a horrible thing for him, that he has not hesitated to bless his soul, (rather: God,) while he has an evil conscience. That from the expression, "he blesses the Lord," we are not to conclude the Psalmist to have had respect merely to the wicked belonging to Israel, is manifest from the passage already quoted, Zech. xi. 5, the oversight of which has been a main cause in the misunderstanding of this. There the discourse is of the flock of slaughter, whose buyers slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say, "Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich." Under the buyers and sellers are there to be understood the foreign oppressors, see Christol. in loc. The blessing or praising of the Lord here, on account of gain, we are not to regard quite so seriously,—it is done half in joke,—and then even the heathen were inclined to grant a certain portion to Jehovah of the gains which they obtained among his people,—comp. for example, Jer. l. 7. De Wette, following many of the older expositors, and himself again followed by Maurer and others, expounds quite differently: The plunderer blasphemes, despises God. If we would follow this exposition, we must, in that case, not take ברך in the sense of *blaspheming*, which it never has, but in that of *renouncing, bidding farewell*, taking its rise in the custom of *blessing* at separation. That the sense of *blaspheming* does not, and cannot exist, Schultens has proved on Job, p. 12. Comp. further, my Beitr. Th. II. s. 131, where it is shown, that that sense is not found in the passage, 1 Kings xxi. 10, on which the principal stress is laid. Neither must בצע have the signification of *plun-*

derers forced upon it, which is not justified from בֹּצֵעַ being sometimes rendered *robber* in Hab. ii. 9—for what might not then be proved?—but it must be taken in the only certain signification: the gain-getting, which is also perfectly suitable in Hab. ii. 9. The meaning, then, of בֹּצֵעַ בֵּרַךְ רָע, is, who gaineth a wrong gain, and not only is the sense of *robber* unsuitable, but that also of *covetous*, which others would impose on it. Therefore: Who is just always making gain, takes leave of the Lord, despises him. The verbs בֵּרַךְ and נִאַץ would then mark a progression. But it is against the exposition, even when thus modified, that thereby the so obvious and striking contrast between *blessing* and *despising*, the designation of the highest degree of impiety by the juxtaposition of these extreme opposites, is annihilated; to which also, it must be added, that בֵּרַךְ can scarcely be taken in any other sense than that of *blessing*, were it only for the parallelism with חִלֵּל, to extol; the extolling of the desire of his soul, and the blessing of God on account of his unrighteous gain, hang closely together. The exposition: He blesses himself, adopted by Stier and others, after Venema, is quite arbitrary. In the passage referred to by them, Deut. xxix. 18, the verb in Hithpael is unquestionably used in a transitive sense. We repeat, that all these wrong expositions are convicted of error by the passage in Zechariah.

Ver. 4. *The wicked in his pride: he does not inquire, God is not, are all his purposes.* The *height of the nose* is a picturesque description of *pride*. Many render the first clause: the wicked in, or according to, his pride, does not concern himself. They either supply *God* to יִדְרֹשׁ: he does not seek after, or care for God; or they make the verb quite general: in his heart the wicked sets himself far above all; right and wrong are alike to him; he knows no other law than his own lust. "The principle of right action through the whole of life," remarks Calvin, "is inquiry, not allowing ourselves to be blindly carried about, wherever our own temper and the constraint of our fleshly corruptions would draw us. But the disposition to inquire springs from reverence, in that we, as becomes us, set God before us as our judge and guide." But others take בְּל יִדְרֹשׁ as words of an evil doer: the wicked in his pride (says) he (God) searches or perceives not. And this exposition, which presents no difficulty on account of the extremely concise style of the Psalm, is shown to be the correct one, by comparing ver. 13, "Wherefore

doth the wicked despise God? He hath said in his heart, Thou will not require it," לא תדרש, a parallel passage, which is the more decisive, as ver. 13 manifestly resumes the subject of ver. 3 and 4. In these verses there is the representation of the fact, he despises God, he says, "thou perceivest not;" in ver. 13 respect is had to the lawlessness of such conduct, and the necessity of putting it down: *wherefore* does he despise, wherefore does he speak. We may also comp. דרש דמים, in Ps. ix. 12, where the verb, in like manner, signifies to inquire for, to take notice of. The denial of providence is here justly marked as the product of pride. The wicked would be a God himself, therefore he suppresses consciousness regarding God in heaven. *God is not, are all his purposes,* they are a continued practical denial of God. For had he a real conviction of the being of a living God, he would stand in awe of the judgment-seat. Whether he might have a cold and dead notion of God, or even of his providence, is a matter of indifference. Venema: "Their counsels and projects were such, that in their very nature they involved the denial of God, and if an inference might be drawn from these of the faith of those who entertain them, we should conclude them to be deniers of God." In the same sense as those who are said to have confessed God in words, but denied him by their works, Tit. i. 16." מזמה we take here, according to the phraseology usual in the Psalms, for ungodly purposes, and the rather so, as it had occurred in that sense in ver. 2. The sense is weakened if we render, with other expositors: There is no God, are all his thoughts. This exposition is also unsuitable, in that it would attribute a *theoretical* denial of God to the wicked, in opposition to the first clause, ver. 3, ver. 11 and 13. Some, in order to avoid this objection, would take the "not God," against the usage, as meaning: God is nothing, he prevails nothing. אין always denies existence, not quiddity—see Christol. P. ii. p. 474, ss. Hupfeld, Hitzig, and De Wette, in his 4th ed., take רשע absolutely, and both periods as expressing his thoughts: "The wicked, according to his pride, he punishes not, God is not, are all his thoughts. But this construction, which destroys the parallelism, rests upon the view of מזמותיו, which has already been proved to be false. If this be understood of the *purposes,* it cannot be referred to בל ידרש. For the denial of providence is, according to ver. 11 and 13, the *theoretical* principle of the wicked.

Ver. 5. *His ways,* his undertakings, *are always prosperous.*

The Chaldee gives this sense, and the best expositors follow him. The verb חוּל occurs in a similar meaning in Job xx. 21, and the derivative, חַיִל, *strength*, also confirms it. Against the parallelism, some expositors take it in the unsupported sense of *being crooked*, and translate: His ways are always crooked. The relation of the two following members to this first, was already pointed out quite correctly by Venema: "The other two members take out of the way the obstacles to prosperity, the one of which is the judgments of God, the other, the attacks of enemies." *A height are thy judgments*, thy punishments, *away from him*, i. e. thy righteous chastisements are so far removed from him, that they never reach him. This can only be understood two ways—either as a continued description of the prosperity of the wicked, and their freedom from punishment, from which sprung their supercilious security described in ver. 6, or as a description of this supercilious security itself, as a consequence of their being "prospered in their ways." The latter exposition is adopted by Calvin: "Because continual prosperity flows in upon them, they think that God is obliged to them. And so it comes to pass, that they put his judgments far from them." But as the reference to the wicked's thoughts is not in the slightest manner indicated, and since the preceding words, "his ways are prosperous," refer not to the imagination, but to the reality, this view could only then be considered as admissible, if these grounds could be removed, by the undeniable reference of the last clause to the supercilious security of the wicked. This, however, is by no means the case. The last clause, also, has respect, not to the thoughts, but to the actual condition of the wicked. The preceding context affords a presumption in favour of this view, and the most natural exposition is: *All his adversaries, he blows at them*, i. e. he drives them away with little trouble, he has only to breathe, and they vanish: comp. Isa. xl. 24, "He blows upon them, and they wither," and the cujus tu legiones diffiavisti spiritu quasi ventus folia, of Plautus in the Mil. Glor. i., 1, 17. The exposition of the words in reference to a certain blowing, through which a proud disposition manifested itself, has this against it, that such a blowing is nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament. In Mal. i. 13, to which we are referred, the הפיח, to make to breathe out, is, by comp. with Job xxxi. 39, as much as, to blow out the light of life, to rob the soul, to annihilate. So that the whole three

clauses refer to the external condition of the wicked, and the following verse for the first time represents the influence, which his fortune and his impunity have upon his disposition.

Ver. 6. A feeling of security grows with his prosperity. *He says in his heart, I shall not be moved, from generation to generation, I am he who is not in adversity, i. e.* is not unfortunate. The meaning is: Misfortune shall never overtake me. The expression, "from generation to generation," is to be explained by the circumstance, that the wicked here is an ideal personage. בְּרָע, *in evil*, for in misfortune, as in Ex. v. 19. The אֲשֶׁר stands with peculiar emphasis, and not as a kind of expletive, as we might at first sight suppose. He is *that* man who defies all misfortune, from whom God can take away nothing, even though he would. Precisely so is it also used, for example, in Isa. viii. 20, "If they speak not according to these, they are those in whom the light has not dawned." Calvin here beautifully contrasts the confidence of the pious, which is the offspring of faith, and the false security of the wicked. "The latter says, I shall not be moved, or shall not shake for ever, because he thinks his strength sufficiently powerful to bear up against all assaults. The believer says, If I should happen to be moved, or even to fall, and then to sink into the lowest depths, still I shall not utterly perish; for God will put his hand beneath me."

Ver. 7. The representation given of the violation of duties toward neighbours, which the ungodly, confirmed in his unconscientiousness by his prosperity, allows to grow into actual guilt, is commenced in this verse with the *words*, and proceeds in ver. 8—10 to *deeds*. *His mouth is full of cursing, and of deceit and oppression.* אָלָה preserves here its common signification. But the circumstance, that it occurs here in a description, which refers only to the relation toward neighbours, and its being coupled with *deceit* and *oppression*, shows that the discourse here is of such cursings as the ungodly utters upon himself, so that he may be successful in his deceit, and may win confidence to the perjuries through which he seeks to circumvent his neighbour in goods and chattels—a mark which agrees better with the wicked among themselves, than the enemies from among the heathen, who plundered with rude violence. In Ps. lix. 12, אָלָה is coupled, as here, with מִרְמָה, with כַּחַשׁ, *lying*. Against the connection, Stier regards the cursings, execrations, and calumnies, as directed towards God, as well as men. מָלֵא not an

adjective, but a verb.—*And of deceit and oppression.* מרמות the LXX. render by πικρία, bitterness, probably confounding the word with מרות from מרר.—*Under his tongue is sorrow and mischief.* עמל, never active distress, which one brings upon another, but here, as always, misfortune, distress, which others suffer. און signifies here, and constantly, *mischief.* The sorrow, the product of the mischief, is in, and with this under the tongue—comp. the investigations upon both words in my Treatise on Balaam, p. 112, sq. In the expression, "under his tongue," the metaphor must be taken, according to most interpreters, from the poison of serpents, which is concealed under the teeth, and from thence is pressed out, as is mentioned in Ps. cxl. 3, "Adder's poison is under their lips." But the parallelism, with the *mouth*, favours the closer exposition of others, according to which, the tongue is here named as *the organ of speech.* That the Psalmist says *under* the tongue, and not, as elsewhere, *upon it*, arises from his thinking of a whole storehouse of misery and affliction as being under their tongue, from which, at fitting times, particular portions are taken and laid upon the tongue. This corresponds precisely to the words in the first clause: His mouth is *full.* His mouth is like a magazine of sorrow and mischief. It is also against the reference to the poison of serpents, that, in Ps. lxvi. 17, the expression, "under the tongue," is in like manner used of words, and that in a good sense, "I cried unto him with my mouth, and the song of praise was under my tongue."

Ver. 8. The train of thought represents, that if God would help, it is now the proper time, as the profligacy of the wicked was mounting to the highest pitch, and so the Psalmist turns himself from words to deeds. He describes them as high-way murderers, who lay wait for the defenceless traveller for the purpose of destroying him. The greater part are disposed to understand this representation *figuratively:* the wicked must be *likened* to robbers. But there is just as little ground for this supposition, as for the other, that a reference exists here to special historical relations. The representation is not a figurative, but an individualizing one, and the precise mode in which the active principle of evil here comes into view, is in reality no more under consideration, than any others; the individualizing serves only to give vividness to the description. The particular trait, besides, manifestly suits better to evil-doers among the

Israelites, than to foreign adversaries, who were wont to break in upon the land with open violence, and not to waylay individuals in lurking-places—comp. the analogous description, Job xxiv. 14, Hab. iii. 14, to which De Wette appeals in support of the reference to the heathen, is placed by him in a distorted light. The Chaldeans are there expressly compared to such as waylay the poor in secret places, who are here the subject of discourse; it cannot therefore have been *their* custom. *He lies in the lurking places of the villages,* i. e. in concealed places, in the thicket, in the neighbourhood of townships, they lie in wait for the peaceable inhabitants, with the view of suddenly falling upon them, and killing or plundering them. The verb ישב is primarily used of the lion, who lies in his den upon the watch, comp. v. 9, then also of men. *In the secret places he murders the innocent.* מסתר is used pre-eminently of covered places, which are adapted for snares. So, of the dens of lions, where they lie in secret, Ps. xvii. 12; Lam. iii. 10.—*His eyes keep watch upon the miserable.* צפן prop. denotes to *conceal,* and nothing else. The sense of *watching,* as it occurs here and in Prov. i. 11, 18, comes only from the general omission of the object, as is often the case in Hiph., namely, the concealed place of the snares or gins. But this omission must have been so current, that the verb had generally received the sense simply of watching. For here, on account of the connection with the eyes, respect is no longer had to the object. חֶלְבָּה is very differently explained. The Masorites would have it to be made up of the defectively written word חֵיל host, and the suff. הָ with ה appended; while they therefore believed, that the first syllable must have been originally written in full, they have given to it the vowel Zere, since otherwise, in a compound syllable, a *short* vowel must always stand, so that the vowels, as suitably placed for the Masoretic meaning, do not come under consideration. This exposition of the word, which a number of interpreters follow, is undoubtedly false, and yields no fitting sense. Equally false is another explanation, that of Schroeder ad Ps. dec. p. 180—88, which is adopted by most recent expositors. According to it the word is derived from the Arabic حلك, to be black, which, in the metaphorical sense, must mean to be *unfortunate.* It is in itself a questionable proceeding to bring over a root at once into the Hebrew, which is otherwise not met with in it, and that too

in a sense not even found in the Arabic; some faint trace of it is discernible there only in the derivatives. The chief objection, however, on the other side, is, that the ה cannot, as is done by some, be taken as a formative, or with others as parag., since the plural חלבאים in ver. 10, where the ה is exchanged for א, shows it to be a *radical*. We must rather take the word as a quadriliterum compositum, and that from the two Hebrew roots חלה, to be weak, sick, and כאה, to be sorrowful, afflicted. Comp. Ps. cix. 16, Ez. xiii. 22. The sing. is then to be pointed חַלְכָּה, the plural חַלְכָאִים. There are not wanting examples of similar compounds; comp. Ewald, p. 519, Christol. P. ii. p. 98. The double form with ה and with א admits then of an easy explanation, because both letters properly belong to the root, and there was freedom to abbreviate it by omitting either the one or the other. We can thus also understand how the Masorites should have come to consider the word as a double one. In ver. 10 they quite correctly apprehend the one of its component parts. They take חלכאים as meaning a *band of afflicted ones*, and consequently derive כאים from the verb כאה. With this exposition agrees also admirably the rendering of the LXX. the Syriac, Chal. by *poor*, that of Aquila and Symm. by *weak*. But what is the main thing, this exposition is in perfect accordance with that which the Psalm itself suggests in reference to the signification of חלכה. And here there come first to be considered the other kind of designations which are applied in the Psalm to those now denoted by this word. In reference to these, it is remarked by Gousset: "They are called twice, ver. 14 and 18, by the name יתום, once by that of נקי, and generally by that of עני. But we shall justly prefer that of עני, because it frequently occurs in the same discourse as denoting the proper subject of discourse, and suggesting the idea the writer had chiefly in view." Then, an important consideration for the right exposition is supplied by ver. 10, where חלכאים stands in opposition to עצמים, the strong. Now, in חלכאים, according to the view we have taken, both ideas, that of mournful, poor condition (כאה), and that of weakness (חלה), are combined, while the latter, according to the derivation from חלך is entirely sunk. Besides, the writer unquestionably formed this word himself, which is never met with elsewhere, and intentionally made it somewhat enigmatical.

Ver. 9. *He lies in wait in the secret places as a lion in his den, he lies in wait to catch the poor, he does catch the poor, drawing him with his net.* The suff. in במשכו refers to the *poor;* comp. in Hosea xiv. 4, בחבלי אדם אמשכם, funibus humanis eos attraxi. Others refer it to the ungodly, and translate: while he draws, or draws to his net; comp. משך with ב, in the sense of drawing, in 1 Kings xxii. 34. The Psalmist, who, in the first member, had compared the robber to a lion, lets this image drop here, and represents the ungodly under the figure of a hunter, who casts his noose around the neck of the unsuspecting wild beast; comp. Psalm xxxv. 7; lvii. 6. The thought which lies at the bottom of the figurative representation is this, that the ungodly always unite cunning with open violence, and that, consequently, the poor servants of God must be poor every way, unless the Lord deliver them.

Ver. 10. *Crushed, he sinks down,* the poor man. The first word has a double reading. The form in the text, which must be spoken, וְדָכָה, is an adj. verb, formed from דכה = דכך; the marginal reading, which must be spoken וְדָכֶּה, and the vowels of which, as usual, stand in the text, is fut. in Kal of דכה. The text is here, as always, when no urgent reason exists for the contrary, to be preferred to the margin. The unhappy man is represented under the image of a wild animal, which, entangled in the net, falls to the ground. The *crushing,* overpowering, is to be taken figuratively, and refers to the utter impotence produced by the netting, to use his powers and save himself, comp. Psalm lvii. 6. With the *sinking down* here should be compared "my soul is bowed down," in Psalm lvii. 6. *And the poor falls through his strong ones.* עצומים signifies, wherever it occurs, *the strong,* hence we are to reject all those expositions which would give the word another meaning, from such as derive to it a foreign sense out of the Arabic, to those which take it as an abstract in the sense of *strength.* The suff. ו refers to the wicked as an ideal person. *His strong ones* stand in opposition to חלכאים, and indicate how the latter, in their impotence and helplessness, must be an easy prey for such formidable enemies. Through his strong ones, is substantially the same as, through them, the strong. The individuals are represented as belonging to the personified idea. Calvin explains it otherwise. According to him, the image of a lion is here continued, his claws and teeth

are personified as strong warriors. These suppositions, though deserving to be rejected, as the Psalmist has long since dropt the image of a lion, are, however, more admissible than the one adopted by some recent expositors, who would have the word to signify *strong members*, by which also the manifest contrast between עצומים and חלכאים, requiring the former, according to its common import, to be understood of persons, is much weakened. The connection between a verb in the singular with a noun in the plural, is always allowable, then, when the verb precedes, since the speaker does then still not think of determinate persons, of their number or sex; comp. Ewald, p. 639.* Here the use of the singular was the more natural, as in the first member the discourse had still been of the poor.

Ver. 11. The Psalmist here comes back again to the *source* of the impiety of the wicked, their delusive belief, fostered by their continued impunity, that God's providence takes no oversight of human things. He brings this so prominently out, because it must be the most pressing motive for God's interference, and is consequently the best preparation for the immediately following prayer. *He*, the wicked, *says in his heart: God hath forgotten*, namely, my shameful deeds, as well as the sufferings of the unfortunate; it is to him all one what is done on earth, he troubles himself not about it—*he hideth his face*, that he may not be disturbed in his repose by the misconduct he perceives on earth, *he sees not for ever.*

Ver. 12. *Arise, O Lord: O God lift up thine hand; forget not the poor.* Here the second part begins, *the prayer*, which, of itself, springs out of the lamentation that had been uttered before God, and was virtually indeed contained in that. As the visible presented no traces of God's righteousness and providence, but *seemed* rather to clash with these, it is to the Psalmist, according to the weakness of human nature, no otherwise than if God did rest, not concerning himself about earthly things, and leaving his people in forgetfulness. But while the ungodly purposely cherishes and feeds this error, the offspring of his own reprobate state of mind, the believer fights against it, as a thought that has arisen only from his troubled condition, and prays the Lord to help him in this conflict, and, at the same time, to destroy the delusion of the wicked, by making himself known in his righteousness and recompenses. *The lifting up of the hand*, is spoken of one, who, after he has been

taking rest, and has put his hand into his bosom, arises and addresses himself to his work. The words "forget not," refer to those of the wicked in ver. 11, "God hath forgotten." On the different readings, עניים and עניים, see on Psalm ix. 12. Here, too, the latter, which is the marginal reading, has owed its existence to the supposition that a *moral* quality was required.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore does the wicked contemn God?* Wherefore dost thou permit him to despise thee with impunity? Wherefore *does he speak, Thou perceivest not,* prop. thou dost not inquire. This, with God, coincides with *punishing.* For God inquires into the doings of men, and from that, he being a righteous God, it necessarily follows that he also recompenses. The transition from the third person to the second gives more emphasis to the language. He speaks as if God had become visibly present. Still we might also take the words "Thou perceivest not," as an oblique speech, = that thou perceivest not, and this mode of viewing it is even to be preferred. Calvin: "Though it is superfluous to bring forth reasons to God, for the purpose of persuading him, he yet permits us to deal familiarly with him in our prayers, just as a son may speak to his earthly father. For the object of the prayer must always be kept in view, namely, that God may be the witness of all our affections, not as if they should otherwise escape him, but because, while we pour out our hearts before him, our cares are so far lightened, and our confidence of being heard, increases. Thus David at present, considering how absurd and intolerable it was, that God should be despised with impunity, by the impious, thence derives the hope of deliverance. The verse, besides, stands in close connection with the first part, ver. 3 and 4. *There* the fact was set forth, here respect is had to its senseless, unfounded nature, and consequently to the necessity of a change of aspect in regard to the actual state of things.

Ver. 14. *Thou hast seen.* The Psalmist here rises to the highest confidence of faith, that the Lord will put to shame the delusion of the ungodly, mentioned in ver. 11, as to God's being unconcerned about earthly things in general, and especially about their wickedness, that he sees both their abominable deeds, and the sufferings of the righteous, and will act accordingly. We might regard this as the commencement of the third part of the Psalm. However, as the Psalmist turns back again

to the prayer in ver. 15, it is better to begin the third part with ver. 16, from where confidence alone has the ascendant. When more closely examined, the confidence here also is different from that in ver. 16, sq. Here it is grounded upon a conclusion, there it is an immediate conviction. Confidence of the first kind, which may be designated a pre-supposing one, is more related to prayer, nay, a kind of prayer: I hope still, that thou dost see. The Psalmist *here* declares his confidence in the form of a conclusion, from the genus to the species. God is, in general, the all-knowing, the righteous one, the true helper of his people, consequently, he both will, and must prove himself to be so here also. This inference from the genus to the species is, of all problems, the most difficult, and one that can be solved only by the powerful assistance of God. That all human things are placed under God's providence, is not so difficult to be received as a matter of conviction, but to judge by this of every particular oppression, to apply this doctrine to it, at the very time when the flesh disposes us to feel precisely the reverse, when God appears to be merely an inactive spectator of our misery, this is what none but the regenerate can accomplish, and where it is spoken of as being done, it must be regarded as the fruit of a living faith in the Divine providence. The same holds good also in reference to the doctrine of the atonement. To be convinced that Christ has died for the sins of the whole world, is not so difficult. But to be convinced, and firmly persuaded, that he died specially for *our* sins, when sin and Satan are loudly crying the opposite, lies beyond the reach of human power. The object of the expression, "Thou hast seen," which carries a reference to "he does not see for ever," in ver. 11, is *the particular case*,—that, in respect to which the ungodly had declared, God inquires not. The תביט, on the other hand, refers to the *general*. If we allow this, then כי will appear quite suitable as a part of speech, and there is no need to ascribe to it, with many expositors, uncommon meanings, such as *yea, yea indeed*. To this also agrees the use, first of the preterite, and then of the future. Thou hast seen, *for* thou must behold. If the latter were not, the supposition of the first were also a quite groundless one. For God does nothing which has not its foundation laid in his nature, and what has its foundation there, must be done as a matter of course. But if the latter exists, then it is *unreasonable* not to admit the first. For this is vir-

tually to hold that God denies himself, that he is not God. *For thou seest suffering and anger in the city, to put them in thine hand.* The verb כעס always signifies to be *angry*, the noun, without exception, *rage, anger*, and the meanings *grief, lamentation*, in which expositors take it here and in some other places, is ascribed to it merely from the connection. Here it is the anger that arises on account of the unjust assaults of the wicked, the righteous indignation, the subjective feeling which is called forth by the suffering, עמל; comp. 1 Sam. i. 6, where an example also occurs of the manner in which God takes this anger into his hand, when he appears for a moment to forget; also the expression in ver. 2, "the poor burns," and the passage in Job vi. 2, which is important for the signification of כעס, in connection with words expressive of misfortune. In the words, "to give, or put them in thine hand," the image, according to many, must be derived from those who make for themselves marks of remembrance in their hand. The justness of this explanation is clear from Isa. xlix. 16, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." But the use of the verb נתן does not favour the view adopted. Rather is the thought that the Lord lays the sufferings of his people in his hand, a mark that he will, in his own time, avenge it upon their enemies, that no part of their afflictions escapes him, or is a matter of indifference to him, comp. lvi. 8, "Thou tellest my wanderings, put my tears in thy bottle, nay they stand in thy book." Against the sense of *recompensing* with thy hand, there is also, apart from the impropriety of assigning such a meaning to *giving* without any addition, the circumstance that נתן ביד uniformly occurs in the sense of, putting in the hand. *The poor surrenders to thee.* יעזב, *must* give up, commit to thee, as the last parallel member shows. The discourse is not immediately of that which the helpless in duty *ought* to do, but what he, in good confidence, *can* do. The verb is not to be taken here in a sort of reflective sense; neither is any definite object, his weakness or the like, to be supplied; but it is as if he had said: the unhappy man commits to thee, to thee he surrenders. *The orphan, thou art the helper.* יתום denotes here, by way of individualizing, him who is without father, deliverer, and helper upon earth, but has such in heaven,—so Lam. v. 3, and elsewhere. We must not, however, take "orphan" quite figura-

tively, so as to exclude the literal orphan, but among the different kinds of human helplessness which are under the protection of God, one only of the most prominent is named, which, on that account, comprehends all the rest, because what moves God here to show himself helpful must be found also in the others. What God does in a particular case, always rests upon a general property, grounded in his nature. If it is certain, for example, that God is a helper to the orphan, the widow needs no more special promise. As we are not warranted to take the orphan figuratively, and as the proper orphan can only be an object of oppression to the internal workers of iniquity, who take advantage of its helplessness, such a trait may also be regarded as pointing (see, too, the repeated mention of the orphan in ver. 18,) to the result that the Psalm does not allude simply to heathen enemies.

Ver. 15. *Break the arm of the wicked*, annihilate his power, which he is applying to the destruction of the innocent,—*and the evil, seek out his wickedness, find them not.* רַע, according to the accents, belongs to the second member, and stands as nom. absol.: *And the evil.* Expositors generally explain: Thou mayest seek his wickedness, not find it, *i.e.* thy judgments shall so utterly annihilate him that even thine all-seeing eye shall be able to detect no more wickedness remaining to be punished. The trackless disappearance of a thing, and its complete destruction, are often denoted by the seeking and not finding of it, comp. Psalm xxxvii. 35, 36. But it is remarked, on the other hand, quite correctly by Claus, after the older expositors, as Venema, that there is thereby to be overlooked the undoubted reference to the *inquiry* in ver. 13. The verb must here be taken in the same sense as there,—therefore: search out his wickedness, drag it before thy judgment-seat, to which he thinks himself not liable, and that with such a result, that it shall be utterly brought to an end, that thou thyself shall find it no more. Venema: "Until thou shalt not find, *i.e.* until there shall be none surviving, or nothing shall remain to be punished, and so thou mayest require to the very uttermost." To the לֹא תִדְרֹשׁ of the ungodly stands opposed the דָּרַשׁ. The בַּל תִּמְצָא contains a piece of covert raillery. True, indeed, as thou sayest, it shall not be found, but from quite another cause than thou supposest, because thou, with thy ungodliness, shall be wholly extirpated. The prayer, that God would break the arm of the un-

godly, and search out his wickedness, proceeds from the living faith that he could and must do so, that the ungodly raged only through his permission, that he would be made to disappear without leaving a trace behind, the moment God pleased, and that he would certainly be pleased to do it in his own time. We have proceeded on the supposition that תדרש and תמצא are to be taken optatively in paral. with the imper. שבר. But, as the demand has hope for its foundation, we can, consequently, expound: Thou *wilt* search out, thou *wilt* not find; and this might be represented as the more suitable, since the transition to the most undoubting confidence, as that is expressed in ver. 16, appears then as a more natural one: break, therefore, we pray; thou wilt search out, that we hope for, they are perished, that we behold.

Ver. 16. The third strophe—the *confidence*, as it springs from the inwardly received assurance of being heard. The Psalmist gives utterance here to an exuberant joy of faith. The Lord has granted him such an internal assurance of being heard that he already sees the ungodly conquered, and the holy land of God purged of their abominations. *The Lord is king for ever and ever.* At an earlier period, when his faith still underlay tribulation, it had appeared to the Psalmist as if the Lord were thrust down from his high throne, but now the matter presents itself to him quite otherwise. Faith shows him how impotent all attempts of the rebels are to rob him of his supremacy. He is, and abides KING, and will maintain his position as such now and for ever. The Lord is named *king* here, not as ruler of the world, but as sovereign over his people and his holy land, comp. Deut. xxxiii. 5, Num. xxiii. 21. *The heathen are perished out of his land*, Luther understands by גוים such as must have belonged to God's people and the chosen Israel, but have now gone out of the way and become heathens, and so are no longer God's people, but his enemies. So also Calvin with an appeal to Ezek. xvi. 3, "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan, thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite," for: As to thy way and manners thou derivest thy being from these people, comp. other passages in which the ungodly among the Israelites are described as heathens, in *Christol.* P. ii. p. 398. But we have no reason here to depart from the usual signification of the word, and this, indeed, is rather confirmed by a comp. with ver. 9, where heathens, in the proper sense, are unquestionably meant. גוים also signifies, not hea-

then as individuals, but heathen nations. Yet it does not follow from this that the whole Psalm limits itself to them. The Psalmist might here very well name a particular species of ungodly enemies—just as the poor are in ver. 14, 18, denoted by the individualizing term of the *orphan*, and the wicked in ver. 8—10 are described under the particular character of *robbers*—because the same law which brought *their* subjection, would certainly carry in its bosom the subjection of the others. Against the exclusive reference of the whole Psalm to heathenish enemies, we have to urge the want of any special allusion to them in all the rest of the Psalm, and the existence of many traits which suit better a home conflict between the pious and the ungodly, comp. on ver. 7—10. But all appearances are satisfactorily explained when the Psalm is viewed as a song for the general use of the pious when suffering oppression at the hands of the wicked,—it being of no moment whether the latter were merely uncircumcised in heart, or also uncircumcised in flesh, comp. Jer. ix. 25. The words, "out of his land," point to the cause of the extirpation of "the heathen." The pret. אבדו is to be explained thus, that the Psalmist, by the internal view of faith, sees his enemies as already annihilated.

Ver. 17. *Thou hast heard, O Lord, the desire of the meek, thou makest their heart firm*, through the inward conviction which thou givest them of the hearing of their prayer, thou impartest to them the power of resisting all assaults, in the firm hope of obtaining the deliverance promised them. A firm heart is opposed to a heart that is moved, shaking, trembling, and indicates courage, strength, repose, comp. Ps. cxii. 7, "his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord," Ps. li. 12, lvii. 7. *Thou causest thine ear to hear.*

Ver. 18. *In that thou judgest the orphan and the oppressed.* These words are closely connected with the last of the preceding verse.—*The man of the earth will not continue to brave.* We must take the words as an expression of confidence, not of desire. For in the latter case, the abbreviated fut. would have been used. אנוש has, as formerly remarked, the subordinate ideas of feebleness and weakness, which are still more plainly denoted by the addition, "of the earth," q. d.: He who is sprung from the earth, who belongs to it, the man of the earth as opposed to the God of heaven. The expression occurs in Ps. cxlviii. 7, "Praise the Lord, מן הארץ, ye of the earth," ye in-

habitants thereof; before, in ver. 1, it was, praise the Lord from the heavens. Comp. also, examples of the similar uses of כִּי in Venema in loc. The verb עָרַץ has in the Arabic and Hebrew, (Isa. xlvii. 12) the signification of *withstanding, braving.* As the object of the resisting or braving, God is to be understood. Between לְעָרֵץ and הָאָרֶץ there exists an intentional paronomasia, pointing to the sharp conflict between *nature* and *will.* The exposition of Hitzig and others: That one may not further drive the people out of the land, is already confuted by the parallel passage, Ps. ix. 19, 20, "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail," where the same contrast is found between the *assumed* strength, and the *native* weakness; and also by the circumstance, that the significance of the paronomasia is destroyed, which was taken notice of by Luther: "Here is a fine play upon the words, in that man, who is still of the earth, should magnify and exalt himself; which carries a strong contrast with it, since it is wholly and utterly unsuitable, that man, as he is a man, born of the earth, and returning again to it, should lift himself up and act loftily." Also, we do not perceive, how the suffering could be designated by אֱנוֹשׁ, which bears respect merely to human weakness in general. Finally, it is far-fetched to render יוֹסִיף בַּל, *one* will not continue.

PSALM XI.

The speaker is hard pressed by godless enemies, and he is advised, abandoning all, as all indeed was already lost, to look only to the safety of his *life*, ver. 1—3. But he answers, that he puts his confidence in God, who, throned on high in his holy heaven, rules with his providence over the affairs of men, and would assuredly accomplish the overthrow of evil, mighty though it seemed, and secure victory to the righteous, ver. 4—7. "Confidence in the Lord and his protection, even against the *huge* force of the wicked," remarks Claus, is the one subject of this Psalm. After a short expression of this confidence, ("in Jehovah I put my trust,") follows the representation of the facts, which seem to show, that the condition of the people of God is a perfectly hopeless one, that the oppression of the good principle and its supporters, and the triumph of wickedness, is a matter conclusively settled, so that the righteous and upright, who

can no longer rectify public affairs, is obliged at the most, to concern himself only for his personal deliverance. Over against this state of matters, the speaker places the avowal, "I put my trust in the Lord," representing how the Lord would bring deliverance unto what, humanly considered, was certainly hopeless, so that it was right not to flee, but to continue in good courage. The general principle set forth in ver. 4, that the providence of the holy and omnipotent God bears rule among men, ("His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men,") is extended farther in ver. 5 to this, that he knows to love the righteous, and hate the wicked, ("The Lord trieth the righteous, and the wicked his soul hateth,") and these two principles the Psalmist extends still farther in ver. 6 and 7, taking up again the last first, "Upon the wicked he will rain snares," &c., and then returning again to the first, "Righteous is the Lord, he loveth righteousness, his countenance beholds the upright."

The hypothesis of Koester, which would divide the Psalm into two strophes of three verses, with a concluding verse, is quite subverted by this distribution of the matter. The second strophe is mutilated, if we separate ver. 7 from it.

At first sight, the Psalm appears to bear a personal character; the "I put my trust," and, "How say ye to my soul," seem to carry us into the midst of personal relations. But, considered more narrowly, this commencement leads to a precisely opposite result; the address directed to a number, "flee," and the expression, "to *your* mountain," can only be satisfactorily explained, when it is supposed, that the speaker introduced, saying, "I put my trust," is an ideal person, the personification of the whole class—more especially, as the supposition, otherwise far from being natural, that the Psalmist is addressed along with his companions, has the following singular against it, צִפּוֹר, in which the Psalmist again returns to the personification. In ver. 2—7 also, there is no trace whatever of a reference to an individual; we have only to do with "the wicked," "the lover of violence," "the righteous," "the upright," the two classes, which constantly meet us in the Psalms, that are of a general character. How little colour the Psalm affords for a personal construction, is evident from this, that among those, who take that view, it is a subject of perpetual controversy, whether it refers to the times of Saul or of Absalom. The individualizing description in ver. 2, of the misdeeds which the wicked practise

against the righteous, appears also to conclude against both, inasmuch as it points to crafty devices of a *private* nature, whereas, in both the periods referred to, the wicked *openly* lifted themselves up against the righteous—a trait which is equally fatal also to the supposition of De Wette, that the Psalm refers to the relation the Israelites held to their heathen oppressors, comp. on Ps. x. 8—10.

The following, accordingly, presents itself to our mind as the correct view: David had lived to see two great conflicts of the evil principle against the good, and, standing in both as the representative of the latter, had each time strengthened himself in the Lord, and had received deliverance as the reward of his faith. On the ground of this personal experience he shows here, "the righteous," how in similar circumstances, when the church is in a troubled and distracted condition, they ought to behave themselves, viz. that they should not abandon themselves to despair, but should trust in the Lord.

The placing of this Psalm in the same series with the preceding ones, appears to be justified, not merely by the general similarity of its contents, but also specially by the resemblance of v. 2 to Ps. x. 8.

Ver. 1. *In the Lord put I my trust, how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?* אֵיךְ, quomodo ergo—an expression of wonder, of reproach. The words "to my soul," were already explained well by Calvin: "intimating that his inmost bosom was pierced by the taunting question." If the same person who is introduced saying, "In the Lord put I my trust," is an ideal one, the righteous, those who address him must also be ideal persons. The Psalmist has in his eye such as, though attached to a good cause (the words unquestionably betoken that), still rest upon a lower ground of faith, and hence their view continuing wedded to the visible, they think that all was gone without remedy. In reality these persons are merely personifications of the doubting thoughts, which arose of themselves in the mind of the speaker,—the "flee," is the voice of the flesh, which is met by the voice of the Spirit in the declaration, "I put my trust in the Lord." No one, not even the most advanced, needs to seek what is imported in that "flee," out of himself. The plural נודו is accounted for by what has been already remarked. הֹרְכֶם, *your mountain*, is, according to the common interpretation, the mountain which will afford you protection,

in which ye have your place of refuge. But this has something constrained about it, and we cannot but feel ourselves tempted, were it only from the *your* here employed, to take *mountain* in an improper sense, your mountain = your hiding-place. Ven.: mons hic locum exilii extra societatem, ad quam noster pertinabat, designat. This exposition is the more natural, as the following צפור appears to explain it, on account of which the hiding-place is figuratively described as a mountain. Birds escape the dangers, to which they are exposed in the open plain, by betaking to the wood-begirt mountain. But if we should even abide by the literal meaning, the expression would still afford no countenance to the individual reference of the Psalm. For the mountain, in that case, would only be chosen as an individualizing trait, having respect to the natural appearance of Palestine, where the mountains occupy the first rank among the hiding-places—comp. the saying of our Lord, which alludes to this passage, in Matth. xxiv. 16, "Then let those, who are in Judea, flee to the mountains." We are not, as many expositors think, to supply כ simil. before צִפּוֹר, but to regard it as decurtata compar.; as a bird, (a bird in the improper sense.) Lam. iii. 52, "Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird without cause," is a parallel passage. הרכם is in the accus., see on the accus. of verbals of motion, Ewald, p. 585. The Masorites would, on account of the sing. לנפשי preceding, have the reading to be not נודו but נודי. This reading would not have been preferred to that of the text, had it been borne in mind, that, like all the Kris, it has no more than mere conjecture to support it. What is advanced by Hitzig in its support, that the Ketib offends against the sing. צִפּוֹר, and is quite unsuitable to the preceding context, where an individual is addressed, serves for explaining how it arose. It avails as little to the originators, as to the defenders of this reading, to refer back to the interchange between the singular and the plural in this verse. They thus sought to remove what they did not understand, but betrayed little consistence, as they left standing the to them not less inexplicable הרכם. If we look more closely, we shall find, that נודי, flee thou, soul, cannot be admitted. To the soul belongs feeling, not an act. The like may be said of the different reading, which, according to most expositors, the old translators must have followed, and which, after their supposed example, several expositors have preferred: הַר כְּמוֹ צִפּוֹר, to the mountain as a bird.

The easier this reading is, the more doubtful does it become. Our difficult text could never have arisen from that, the understanding of which lies so plainly upon the surface. The old translators probably left out only the suffix, which must always remain a matter of difficulty, so long as one does not recognize in דרכם the decurtata comparatio, which the following צפור so naturally suggests. Too straightened a sense is given to the verse, by those who seek nothing more in it than a simple call to flee. This the righteous might have complied with, as David indeed actually did flee during the persecutions of Saul and Absalom, without necessarily exercising confidence in the Lord. The flight may rather, in the circumstances, be the *product* of confidence. But *here* the righteous places his confidence upon the Lord, in opposition to such a call. In what sense this was meant appears from v. 2 and 3, where it is grounded upon the circumstance, that the constitution of society was shaken to its lowest depths, and all prospect of a healthful state of things was foreclosed against the righteous. This *flee*, therefore, was a word of utter despair, which the righteous meets even here by the declaration, "In the Lord put I my trust," and still more strongly in v. 4, sq., after he had expressly represented, in v. 2 and 3, what those, who looked on things with an eye of flesh, produced in justification of their proposal. As in v. 6 there is undoubtedly a literal reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha, as that is recorded in Genesis, it is possible that the words, "flee to the mountain," allude to those of the angel to Lot, "escape to the mountain," in Gen. xix. 17.

Ver. 2. The friends of the righteous indicate the ground on which they thought flight necessary for him. That כי must not be expounded with Claus, by, *indeed! it is true, certainly!* is self-evident, and consequently, there can be no doubt that this verse, and the next, contain the still prolonged discourse of the friends.—*For, lo! the wicked bend the bow, place their arrow upon the string.*—כון in Pilel aptare,—*to shoot in the dark*,—from a concealed lurking-place, comp. במסתרים in Psalm x. 8, 9,—*at the upright.* There is just as little ground here, as there, for understanding the expression figuratively, the less so, if we keep in view the general character of the Psalm, to which the matter of this verse also certainly points. For the manifestation of wickedness here selected and individualized, which was peculiarly adapted to poetry, as being fond of picturesque

scenes, was, unquestionably, of very rare occurrence in real life, far rarer than others. ישרי לב, properly, *straight of heart*, not in respect to the cunning and malice of the wicked, but to their own state, as conformed to the rule, comp. Vitringa on Deut. xxxii. p. 41: "It is implied in the idea of rectitude, that there is some canon, rule, or common measure, according to which judgment may be given in regard to all spiritual operations. What is conformed to this standard is morally straight, as that is also called in architecture, which is done according to the rule of plumb-lines." [illegible] out the article. That the wicked "upright" is purposely with- the upright, shows what is the state of [illegible] relentlessly persecute to shoot an arrow, elsewhere with the accus., ירה, to throw, [illegible] ב of the person, which belongs to the action, in so far as that is the aim of this. The distinction is such as between [illegible] shooting any one, which carries with it the *hitting*, and shooting at one.

Ver. 3. *For the foundations are destroyed.* We have [illegible] to take כי in the sense of *when*, which it very rarely possesses: When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? The common signification, *for*, is quite suitable. What had been mentioned in the preceding verse, as a particular, is here referred to the general, as the ground from which it springs. This general is a state of moral dissolution, which deprived the righteous of any footing for successful application. שתות from שות is rightly rendered by the Chaldee, Syriac, Aquila, and Symmachus: foundations. What is to be understood by the foundations is obvious enough from the preceding verse, as also from the words, "What can the righteous do"? The basis of society is the supremacy of justice and righteousness. The foundations are destroyed, "in societies remarkably corrupt, in which the laws of right and equity are wantonly trodden under foot," (Venema.)—*The righteous, what does he do?* With the dissolving of the foundations, in the sense meant, the impossibility of the righteous acting goes hand in hand. Things must have gone far with a community, when such an impossibility exists. It suits precisely the pret. פעל, what is said by Ewald in his Small Gr. § 262: "The perfect is used of actions which the speaker considers as complete, as already finished, but so reaching into the present, that modern languages employ the simple present." That the righteous effects nothing, is sufficiently proved by past experience, is a fait accompli. The ex-

position of De Wette and others: The righteous, what should he do, what else should he do than repent, flee away, has against it the pret., the common use of פעל, not facere, but efficere, comp. Job xi. 8; xxxv. 6, and the parallelism, since, according to it, two unconnected periods are united, and we are obliged to give an unhappy turn of this sort to the passage: when the foundations are destroyed, &c.

Ver. 4. The reply of the righteous; Geier: "he returns now to his first expression of confidence, ver. 1, and fortifies himself in that." Although certainly the earth [illegible] hope, though all was [illegible] Lord and his providence made decerned, yet a [illegible] spair appe[illegible] in [illegible] Lord, in his hol[illegible] his [illegible] exposition there is, 1. This, that in the succeeding context the principle, "his eyes see," "his eyelids try," is only farther extended; and 2. The parallel passage in Psalm cii. 18, 19, "For he looks down from his holy height, the Lord looks from heaven upon earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose the children of death." These reasons are sufficient to show that if we prefer the first exposition, which certainly looks the simplest of the two, still the words, "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord, in heaven is his throne," cannot be considered as independently co-ordinate with these others, "his eyes see," &c., but only as the basis on which the assertion in the latter is made; so that this alone, "his eyes see," is the proper shield which preserves the righteous from despair. *The Lord is in his holy temple, i.e.* as appears from the second clause, in heaven. Calvin: "It is a great exercise of faith, when we are on all sides environed by darkness in the world, to seek light from heaven to guide us into the hope of safety. For though all confess that the world is governed by God, yet, when the sad disorder of affairs has enveloped us in darkness, there are few in whose inmost minds this persuasion keeps a firm hold. "*The Lord's throne is in heaven.*" The Lord's throne being in heaven, as a mark of loftiness and majesty, shows his power to see, and the holiness of his abode, arising from his personal purity, his *will;* for as a holy God he cannot permit unholy beings to obtain the

ascendancy in his kingdom on earth. On these two foundations is raised the declaration *his eyes see, his eyelids try the children of men*—his eye is continually directed toward earthly things, he watches every operation of men, continually weighs their spirits. עפעפיו, his eye-lashes, for his eyes, in parallelism with עיניו, because the language offers no expression quite synonymous. בחן, to prove, of the penetrating glance of the Lord as judge.

Ver. 5. *The Lord tries the righteous.* In God's searching and prying inquiry, there lies enclosed, because he is holy, love and protection. Precisely as in Psalm i. 6, the first member is to be supplied out of the second, and the second out of the first. *And the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hates.* Luther: "This, too, is spoken emphatically, in that the prophet does not say simply he hates, but *his soul hates*, thereby declaring that God hates the wicked in a high degree, and with his whole heart. He cannot, as we may say, either see or hear them. It is not to be understood as if God had a soul as we have; just as he has no eyes. The language here is metaphorical," &c.

Ver. 6. *Upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire and brimstone.* ימטר stands here poetically for the common fut. פחים must here, according to various expositors, be taken as a figurative designation of *lightning*, which is alleged to be called also by the Arabians, in prose and poetry, by the name of *chains*. But it is a sufficient objection to this meaning that פח does not signify *cord* in general, but specially gin, snare, trap. We are the less warranted to give up the ordinary signification, as the cords, nets, and snares, in which God entangles the wicked, is a common image of the destruction which he prepares for them; comp. Psalm ix. 15, "In the net which they hid is their own foot taken," Job xviii. 9, "The gin (פח) shall take him by the heel," xxii. 10, "Therefore snares are round about thee," Isaiah xxiv. 17, 18, Prov. xxii. 5. The common signification also of פחים is confirmed here, by the reference it carries to "bird" in ver. 1, being specially used of the snares of bird-catchers; comp. Amos iii. 15, Gesenius, Thes. s. v. While the wicked believe that they have the righteous in their snares, and are now able, with little difficulty, to destroy them, suddenly a whole load of snares is sent down upon them from heaven, and after all flight is cut off for them, they are smitten by the overpower-

ing judgment of God. It is well remarked by Calvin: "He appropriately mentions snares, before he comes to fire and brimstone. For we know that the wicked fear nothing, so long as they are spared by God, but freely wanton, as on an open field. Then if anything of an adverse nature threatens them, they bethink themselves of ways of escape. In fine, they always mock God, as if they could not be caught, until he binds them with his cords" (more correctly: catches them in his gins). In this representation there is, at the same time, contained a refutation of the supposed emendation of Olshausen, which reads פֶּחָם, coals—an emendation inadmissible, indeed, even on the ground that this word, when used without any further addition, denotes black, and not burning coals, in opposition to גחלים, burning coals, as appears incontestably from Prov. xxvi. 21. The same consideration also disposes of the view of Gesenius, that פחים is here singular, and of like import with פח, as also of Boettcher's "etymological explanation" regarding [illegible] meaning "something striking with fearful violence." With etymological explanations [illegible] shall do well to make a very sparing use, in regard to words that are [illegible] frequent occurrence. Hitzig takes the word, indeed, in its common signification, but thinks that the snares must consist of fire and brimstone, "a sort of burning sulphur-threads." It is sufficient to repeat, on the other hand, that פח signifies not cord, but gin, and to refer also to the parallel passages. One is at a loss to comprehend what should have given rise to all these groundless attempts at exposition, since the correct meaning is so obvious. The expression, "that he will rain," can present no proper difficulty, as it simply points to the fulness of God's retributive judgments, noticed already by Luther, when he says that by it "the prophet indicates the great variety and multitude of the evils threatened." In the words, "God will reign fire and brimstone," there exists a literal reference to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrha, Gen. xix. 24. That transaction must be regarded as a standing monument of the punitive righteousness of God, more especially as the scene of it lay before the eyes of the covenant people. The Psalmist hopes that the transaction in question would be repeated, as every divine act, indeed, is a real prediction regarding the future, and, under like circumstances, must again take place. A similar reference is found in Ez. xxxviii. 22, comp Job xviii. 15.

The "fire and brimstone," in the opinion of many expositors on Genesis, in particular Le Clerc and Michaelis, must be understood as a circumlocution for lightning. A number of expositors are inclined also to adopt this exposition here; but it has not sprung from a natural and proper line of inquiry. We have, in both places, to think of a literal rain of brimstone, in conformity with the natural constitution of the region of Sodom and Gomorrha, which supplied material for the fire that was descending. This is perfectly clear from Job xviii. 15, where the brimstone occurs without fire, so that lightning cannot possibly be thought of. If the words here are retained in their natural sense, it becomes obvious how little the latter is to be pressed in the representations which the Psalms give of the destruction of the wicked. That rain of fire and brimstone appears so singular and isolated a thing, that the Psalmist is manifestly to be viewed as representing the similarity as to substance in the future, under the form of the past, and that it is only the nature of the thing which the representation touches.

The last clause is explained by recent interpreters: *And a burning wind is the portion of their cup;* more correctly, *their cup-portion,* for the suffix refers to the collective idea. The wind Silaphot must be the pestiferous wind, which is called by the Arabians Samum, blows in July and August, and instantly kills every thing which does not prostrate itself on the ground. But the language does not support this exposition. Of the two other places where the word occurs, that in Psalm cxix. 53, does not admit of this exposition. And then the image of the burning wind, which does not blow in Palestine, is generally, and in particular, as denoting the punishment of the ungodly, a quite uncommon one. The only well-grounded exposition is: *strong wrath.* The ל is a letter inserted, not belonging to the root, comp. the collection of similar examples in Gusset's Lexicon, and Ewald, p. 520. The root זעף has, in Hebrew, the signification of *being angry,* no other, and that of *being hot* is not once to be found in the dialects; the vehemence of the anger is denoted by the plural, perhaps also by the strengthening of the form. The *wrath-wind* is the Divine anger, which resembles a wind, breaks forth even as a tempest. The representation of the Divine anger, under the image of wind and storm, is a very current one. Here it is the more suitable, as mention had just been made of fire and brimstone. The breath of God's indignation blows up-

on the burning coals, Isa. xxx. 33. In the two other passages also this exposition is quite suitable, Psalm cxix. 53: "Anger, indignation hath taken hold of me, because of the wicked, who forsake thy law." In the paral. ver. 139, קִנְאָה, *zeal*, is substituted for זִלְעָפָה. In Lam. v. 9, the prophet takes the keenness of hunger as a poetical description of his fury. Their *cup-portion*, that which is proper for them to drink—a figurative description of their lot or portion. Upon the form מְנָת, with Kametz, comp. Ewald, *Small Gr.* § 386. Such representations of the fearful destruction of the wicked, as already intimated, are not to be taken literally; but we ought always to bear in mind the remark of Luther on this passage: "This verse contains the description of a storm against the wicked, who do not, however, always perish in an actual tempest, and by a corporeal destruction; but this takes place in a way so far similar that they are carried away, not in peace, and against their wish." This is the *substance* of the thing, the *form* is partly borrowed from the earlier judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrha, and partly adapted to the imaginative character of poetry, so that it must not be taken into account. The threatening meets also its fulfilment in him who, though outwardly reposing in the lap of fortune, breathes his last amid pangs of remorse.

Ver. 7. *For righteous is the Lord, he loves righteousness, his countenance beholds the upright.* The Psalmist concludes, from the nature of God, that he could not do otherwise than suspend over the ungodly the judgment spoken of in the preceding verse. He, the righteous one, loves righteousness, because it accords with his own nature; his eye, therefore, rests with satisfaction upon the upright, as the pillar of righteousness; and he must support and avenge him by the overthrow of the wicked. The verse is to be viewed primarily as laying the ground for what is affirmed in ver. 6. But the comparison with ver. 5 shows that it stands in a co-ordinate relation also to that. We have already remarked, that in it the Psalmist has given a further extension to the first half of ver. 5, just as he has done in ver. 6 to the second. The words, *his countenance beholds*, is a mark of satisfaction. God hides or veils his face from those with whom he is displeased. The plural suffix is to be explained from the fulness and richness of the Divine nature. יְמֹר stands for the *singular*—never, and where it appears to be so, this always arises from its being used in reference to collectives, or ideal

persons, who, in point of fact, comprise a multitude, while it is never used in regard to mere individuals. See on the plural designations of God, which are unconnected with Elohim, and spring from the same root with it, (the plural of the suf. in Gen. i. 26, "In our image, after our likeness,") my *Beiträge*, P. ii. p. 256—260, 309. Here the plural suf. is probably chosen for the sake of having at the close a full, well-sounding form. Others expound: the righteous behold his countenance, as much as: they rejoice in his favour, as the expression unquestionably occurs in Psalm xvii. 15,—only we should then have expected the plural. The plural יחזו, standing between a singular and a plural, cannot, without the greatest violence, be referred to any thing but the latter. Then, by this exposition, the obvious parallelism between the first and second member is left unnoticed, as the יחזו פניו corresponds to אדם, so must ישר stand in a like relation to צדקות. Farther, all proceeds, even as to form in ver. 4—7, from God, and hence upon his acting the conclusion is made especially to turn. But besides, there is not the slightest ground for rejecting the first exposition. It is supported by ver. 4, where, likewise, God's eyes are the *seeing*, and the children of men are the *seen*. Let it only be remarked how exactly this, "his eyes behold the children of men," corresponds to that, "his countenance beholds the upright." A comparison of the two parallel passages also decides against the exposition of Koester: "the righteous shall see it with their countenance," which is inferior even to the second. So also does it conclude against the exposition of Boettcher: "upon what is right his countenance looks." (ישר as neuter, in which Luther also takes it, though not in Ps. xxxvii. 37, yet in Ps. cxi. 8, Job xxxiii. 27.) The seen must here, as well as there, be *persons*. The whole of these expositions vanish the moment we discern aright the structure of ver. 4—7,—see introduction. It is then perceived that the words, "his eyes behold the children of men," in ver. 4, and those in ver. 5, "the Lord tries the righteous," have not merely the signification of passages happening to be parallel, but also supply a sort of test for ascertaining the sense of the passage before us. Against the objection of Boettcher, that ישר is never used as an appellative for the upright, it is enough simply to refer to Ps. xxxvii. 37, and against the allegation of De Wette, that the expression, "his countenance beholds," never occurs, but that it is always, "his eye beholds," Ps. xxxiv.

16 is a sufficient proof, where the words, "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous," are followed by "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

PSALM XII.

The Psalmist complains of the corruption of the world, especially of its prevailing faithlessness and malice, and intreats the Lord to stand by his own, to bring to nought the all-powerful delusion of ungodliness, to which it had been led by confidence in its own deceptive worth, and, finally, to destroy supercilious iniquity, ver. 1—4. The Lord answers, and promises him a sure fulfilment of his prayer, ver. 5. And on this promise the Psalmist places an undoubting confidence, ver. 6—8. The Psalm may be divided into two strophes of four members, the first of which contains the complaint and prayer, and the second the answer and hope.

Those who set out with the supposition that the Psalm possesses an individual character, differ from each other in regard to the precise period of David's life to which it refers. Some understand it of Absalom's revolt, and especially of Ahithophel, others of the persecutions under Saul. The Psalm, however, is undoubtedly not individual, but composed from the first by David for the necessities of the church. The Psalmist never takes into account the help which he personally required; he does not say in ver. 7, "thou shalt keep *me*," but "thou shalt keep *them*," the righteous. From ver. 5, also, it is evident that he prays, not specially for himself, but for "the poor and needy." Then, the oppressed condition of these, not of any single individual, is there marked as the ground of the Divine interference. Finally, in ver. 8, we have the usual contrast in Psalms possessing a general character, between the wicked on the one hand, and the righteous, suffering under their oppressions, on the other.

Attempts have been made to explain this Psalm also of the relations between Israel and the heathen; but the peculiar prominence given to hypocrisy and deceit, would then be without meaning, as the heathen nations acted toward the Israelites, not with cunning, but with open violence. The heathen adversaries did not say, as it is here written in ver. 4, "Through our *tongues*

we will prevail," but through our *swords*. The allusion to hypocrisy and deceit, is just the *individual physiognomy* of the Psalm, and a relation, which does not coincide with that, must, at the very outset, be set aside. The Psalm can only be referred to the internal relations of the people of God themselves, and the great conflict existing within that community, between the righteous and the wicked.

The drift of the Psalm, which Geier rightly describes as "the common complaint of the church of all times," is to show, how the righteous must maintain themselves in the sufferings which come upon them through the corruption of the world, reaching, as it does, even to the covenant-people, especially through prevailing injustice and deception, the artifices of a hypocritical and deceitful tongue, which appear to prepare for them certain destruction. The church must carry this affliction up to God, and with unshaken confidence trust in his help.

On the *Sheminith* see on Ps. vi.

Ver. 1. *Help, Lord.* Luther: "It sounds more impressive, when one says, Deliver, or give help, than to say, Deliver me. As one, therefore, says in our language, under circumstances of great distress, or approaching death: Help, thou compassionate God, crying aloud with the utmost vehemence, and using no prefatory words upon the danger in hand; so does the prophet, as one inflamed with zeal on account of the oppressed state of God's people, cry out without any prefatory words, and implore in the most impressive manner, the help of God." *For the godly man ceases, the upright fail from among the children of men.* It might seem, as the Psalmist in common with the prophets generally complains, that piety, truth, and faith had vanished from the land, and the holy land of the Lord had been changed into a dwelling of unrighteousness, as if the very sting of his pain were derived from this same degeneracy of the people of God, considered by itself, and without respect to the sufferings which were thereby prepared for the righteous. In fact, several expositors, as Venema, have allowed themselves to be deceived by this appearance. But a closer examination shows, that the disappearing of the pious and upright comes here into consideration only in so far as that the righteous man was thereby placed in circumstances of difficulty, being exposed to the attacks of the reigning impiety. The "help" at the very outset, implies that; for that this is as much as "help me, the righteous man,"

is evident from the answer, promising his exaltation, "I will set him in safety, who sighs after it," ver. 5. Then, the same thing is decidedly proved by these other words, in that verse, "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord." It is not, then, the reigning corruption in itself, but what the righteous have to suffer on account of it, that is set forth as the ground of the Divine interference. Ver. 7 and 8 also confirm this view, since they declare the hope, not that God would improve or annihilate the wicked, would purge his floor, but that he would keep the righteous in presence of that race, and raise them out of the depression into which the others had sunk through their machinations.—That the expressions, "The godly man ceases," "The upright fail," are not to be understood very literally, that the Psalmist had only for a moment dropt out of his eye the small beloved band of pious and faithful men, by reason of his sorrow at the far-spread corruption, which he saw all around, is manifest from his own words afterwards, from the mention he makes in ver. 5 of "the poor and needy." Still, the truly pious must have been only a very small flock; otherwise, the Psalmist could not have spoken of the whole human race as of a corrupt mass. Luther: "That the prophet here speaks in such a manner as to make the matter more than it was in reality, arose from his intense zeal—for there always are holy persons upon earth. In the same style, people still complain from time to time, that there is no longer any honesty among men, they act in every thing with deceit." The ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, פסס is best taken with Jarchi as of one meaning with the related אפס, to come to an end, to fail. This signification agrees quite well in the parallelism with גמר. נאמן=אמון, properly, the certain or sure. "The upright fail," stand related to "the godly man ceases," as the particular to the general, or the consequences, coming into special consideration according to the design of the Psalmist, to the foundation. Were it perfectly certain, that אמונים, is an adj. or. part. Pual of אמן, it would unquestionably have to be so taken here. For, beside the paral. here, "the pious or godly," the passage in Micah vii. 2, "The pious is perished out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men," supports it—for there ישר corresponds to אמונים, and the one passage so remarkably coincides with the other, that the prophet appears to have had the words of the Psalmist before him. However, as אמונים often

occurs elsewhere as the plural of אֱמוּן, *fidelity*, while, for the adj. meaning, no certain passage can be adduced, (in Ps. xxxi. 23, נֹצֵר אֲמוּנִים on comp. with שֹׁמֵר אֲמוּנִים of Isa. xxvi. 2, may perhaps, be rendered: maintaining faithfulness,) we are not disposed strenuously to oppose those who, with the Vulgate, render: Truth and faith have disappeared from among men.

Ver. 2. *They speak lies every one with his neighbour, with smooth lips.* Instead of "lies," Luther has improperly: Profitless things. In connections such as this, the word "neighbour" is not to be taken in the attenuated sense that it commonly bears with us. It has respect to the law in which רֵעַ, companion, fellow, friend, interchanges with "brother," and forms, in the commands of the second table, the ratio legi adjecta. *Here* the words, "with his neighbour," point to the abominableness of the conduct spoken of: those, whom they deceive, whom they try to cheat through hollow assurances of friendship, are not ordinary friends, they are such as God has joined to them by closer bonds. When Paul, in the exhortation, Eph. iv. 25, which has reference to this passage, "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one with another," makes the ὅτι ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων μέλη, follow upon the μετὰ τοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, he only gives a development of the same idea, but introduces no new matter. שִׂפַת חֲלָקוֹת is most easily explained as the accus., just as קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא in Ps. iii. 4, as to, or with lips of smoothness—comp. with this kind of accus. Ewald, Small Gr. § 512. The exposition: They speak lips of smoothness—lips for that which is spoken by the lips, words, is opposed by ver. 3, as well as by the parallel: with a double heart. *A lip of smoothness* is a flattering lip; comp. in Ps. v. 9, "They make their tongue smooth"—on which Luther: "Soft, cozening, and hypocritical," Prov. vi. 24. Here he substitutes, "they act the hypocrite," for "They flatter." חֲלָקוֹת is the plural of חֲלָקָה, smoothness.—*With a double heart do they speak.* It is usually expounded: They speak otherwise than they think. But how this sense can be derived from the words without some addition, it is not easy to perceive. The attempts also of Venema to make a distinction: "With a double mind, the one which they express, and another which they conceal, the former bland and open, the other impious and malignant;" and Umbreit: "That is, that they have one for themselves, and another for

their friends, are not without weight. The words, simply considered, imply a duplicity in the mind itself, just as the ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, in Jas. i. 8, is not such an one as is internally unbelieving, feigns faith, but such an one as is at the same time both believing and unbelieving, has faith in the surface of his heart, but in its depths, unbelief. Experience shows, that hypocrisy and flattery very rarely come palpably out to view; this would defeat their object. The hypocrite and flatterer is precisely on this account so dangerous, that he calls into play for the moment only, such feelings as appear to him fitted for accomplishing his aim. He not merely *feigns* love, but he *prepares* it. Yet, while this prepared love is on the surface, the natural hatred still keeps possession of the underground of his heart. In the paral. passage also of 1 Chron. xii. 33, the words בלא לב ולב mark an internal duplicity of heart. Michaelis: "Not with a wavering and discordant, but with a firm and resolute mind." The diversity is indicated by repeating the word, so Deut. xxv. 13, אבן ואבן, stone and stone, a double stone, diverse weights, comp. ver. 14. Ewald, p. 637.

Ver. 3. After the complaint, the Psalmist here makes the prayer follow. The futures must be taken *optatively*, as was already done by the LXX. *The Lord cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that speaks big*, the boastful tongue. Expositors find here a difficulty, through which they have partly been drawn into very forced and false interpretations. Supercilious speeches —say they—proud words against the poor and oppressed, do not square with the design of entrapping by "smooth words." But if we compare the following verse, we plainly see, that the proud speeches are not to be thought of as directed against the poor: that they rather boast of their fancied almightiness, which they possess by means of their artifices, their skill in lying, hypocrisy, and flattery; so that the meaning is: The tongue, which boasts of its power to deceive. They are the same persons, who, in Isa. xxviii. 15, say, "We have made lies for our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." That the rooting out of the lips and the tongue must be executed by extirpating their possessors, is shown in the following verse.

Ver. 4. *Who thus speak*—to be supplied from the preceding verse: The Lord cut off: *through our tongues we are strong*, all we might wish, we can accomplish through our tongue. According to some, this exposition must be regarded as unsuitable,

for a twofold reason—לִלְשֹׁנֵנוּ cannot signify "through our tongue," and the verb has not in Hiph. an intransitive signification; it rather means corroboravit. We must hence translate: Our tongues would we endow with strength, we would so arm them with lies and calumnies, that no one will be in a condition to resist us. Still, however, the reasons against the first exposition are not decisive; לִלְשֹׁנֵנוּ only needs to be rendered, "*in respect to* our tongue," and הִגְבִּיר may warrantably be taken in the sense of "acting vigorously," the more readily, as the assertion, that it can only mean "to strengthen," rests merely upon the single passage of Dan. ix. 27, where it is connected, not as here with לְ, but with the accusative. This exposition also is favoured by the connection and the parallelism. Not the purpose: "we create strength for our tongues," but only the declaration: "through our tongues we show ourselves to be strong," agrees with this "the tongue which speaks big," and especially with that, "*our lips are with us who is Lord over us*," the second member of the verse. On the expression *with us*, J. H. Michaelis: nobis auxilio et praesto sunt; and on this, who is Lord over us: qui impediat, quod nobis placet et decretum fuit. Our lips impart to us such a power, that we can do what we would—by means of our lips we are omnipotent.

Ver. 5. The Lord answers the complaint and prayer of the righteous, and promises to repress the violence. *Because of the desolation of the poor, because of the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord.* מִן is the מִן causae, marking the motion from out of a thing. The misery of the poor is that from which the Divine action proceeds as from its immediate cause, comp. Ewald, p. 601. עַתָּה is used with peculiar emphasis. Till now, says the Lord, I have rested, but now I must act. At the foundation of this lies the consolatory truth, that so soon as the malice of the wicked, and the wretchedness of the poor, has reached a certain point, God must interpose. The last member is literally: *place will I in safety him who sighs after it.* The constr. of שִׁית with בְּ is to be explained in this way, that safety is here considered as a possession, in which God instals the righteous. Till now he had been in distress, now God endows him with safety. Rightly already Calvin: "To the unjustly oppressed God promises an entire restitution." The words contain the answer to the "help," at the commencement. The suff. in לוֹ refers to the deliverance. The pron. relat. is awant-

ing from the originally looser connection, which latterly is still very common in poetry, comp. Ewald, p. 646. פוח signifies in Hiph. to *pant*, to sigh deeply after something; the object after which one does sigh, is connected with it by ל, as in Hab. ii. 3, יפח לקץ anhelat ad finem oraculum, in parallelism with: there is no delay. In a similar way is שאף used, prop. anhelare, not unfrequently of vehement longings and sighings. Therefore: I shall conduct him to a state of safety, who sighs after it, viz. safety. According to this exposition, the second member is quite parallel to the first. On account of the sighing of the needy, will I now arise. Others expound: I set him in safety against whom one, or the impious, puffs. But this exposition is to be rejected on the simple ground, that the verb פוח in Hiph. is never used in the sense of *puffing*. And besides, the puffing is here not at all suitable. The wicked in the Psalm are not scornful tyrants, but sleek hypocrites and flatterers. The exposition of Gesen. in his Thes.: quem sufflant, contemnunt, is also to be rejected. We already showed on Ps. x. 4, that blowing is never used as a gesture of contempt. Others again, as Calvin and Dereser, expound: I set in security him, who is blown upon, whom the ungodly thinks to blow away like mere froth. But we should then have expected not לו, but rather, as in Ps. x. 4, בו. Contrary to usage also is the exposition of Schultens, which takes הפוח in the sense of *breathing upon:* it (the deliverance,) or he must breathe on himself, *i. e.* recover strength. The word, however, never occurs in this signification, and by that exposition אשית would lose its object, which cannot fail.

Ver. 6. The righteous places firm confidence in this promise of the Lord. For: *the words of the Lord*, (" the words of the Lord" here refer to " thus saith the Lord," in v. 5,) *are pure words*, they are throughout *true*, have no mixture of false in them, they are not like impure ore, from which dross and earth must first be removed, but *they are purified silver of a Lord of the earth, purified seven times.* The ב in בעליל we take, with Aben Ezra and Kimchi, as radical, and the word as synonymous with בעל dominus, with a reduplication of the last radical letter, as is done in סגריר, שפריר הכליל, עבטיט, comp. Ewald, small Gr. § 332. לארץ is, instead of the stat. constr., placed thus not without reason, as the Psalmist wished to say " of *a* lord," while ב" הארץ would have implied " of *the* lord of the earth," comp. Ewald, p. 582. It is remarked by Gesenius in his Thes., p. 730,

that "ל stands occasionally after nouns, which signify lord, king, god, and, on the other hand, servant, minister, especially when the noun is used quite indefinitely," as the ל at אדון Gen. xlv. 8, 18, and at מלך, Isa. xxxvii. 13, and in אדון לגו in our Psalm itself. Kings and judges of the earth not unfrequently occur in the Psalms, comp. Ps. ii. 1, 9, cxxxviii. 4, cxlviii. 11. The meaning here is well given by Vatable: "The word of the Lord is like the purest silver, which is diligently and with the greatest care purged from all dross, not for common use, but for the use of an earthly prince." The striking parallel is not to be overlooked, which arises out of this exposition: the word of the Lord of the whole world is pure as the silver of a prince of the earth, it is related to man's word as this silver is to common silver. A great mass of wrong expositions have been occasioned by the belief, that ב was to be taken as a servile. Of these expositions we shall make trial only of that which is now the most current. Rosenm. Gesen. Winer, and Hitzig expound: silver, purified in the workshop, in respect to the earth, or to its supposed ingredients. This exposition is objectionable on two grounds. The meaning ascribed to עליל, *workshop*, is quite arbitrary. If the idea of *working* does lie in the root עלל, as the derivative עלילה and others show, still עליל cannot, from its form, signify a workshop. The form קטיל, is that of adjectives, partly with a passive, partly with an intransitive signification, comp. Ewald, p. 234, and that we must attribute this signification also to עליל, is clear from the frequently occurring fem. עלילה, that which is worked, done, then the work, the deed. This first ground is also available against another exposition, (that of Luther, recently Maurer,) according to which עליל, without any apparent justification from the Hebrew usage, merely upon the authority of the Rabbins, looking at the connection, or upon the ground of an etymological combination, (Hupfeld) is taken in the sense of *crucible*. But the second reason is still more decisive. לארץ cannot possibly be used in reference to the supposed component parts—for that word never denotes the earth as *matter*. For this the Hebrews have a special word, אדמה; for example, "man is of the earth," taken ex humo, could not be expressed by מן הארץ, but only by מן האדמה. This difficulty Umbreit escapes from, by rendering: in the workshop upon earth. But he still has the first standing against him. He is more satisfactory, however, with the לארץ than the defenders of the expo-

sition, "in a crucible," who render it so: upon the earth, where the crucible is fixed,—for that were quite to burden and confuse the sense—or so: out of the earth, earthy (Luther), of which the same may be said, and which is besides contrary to usage. Others, as Michaelis and Dereser, expound: as silver purified in a workshop of earth, as solid silver, which has been found in the mountains, the workshop of earth. But against this is to be advanced, not only the inadmissibility of the exposition of עַלִּיל by workshop, but also that then the connection between the two nouns should necessarily have been by stat. constr., and not by לְ. For the workshop of earth must in that case have been limited by its contrast with a *human* workshop. Besides, one does not see how solid silver, which has never been purified, can be called צרוף.

The comparison of the word of God with purified metal is peculiar to David, and occurs again in Psalm xviii. 30. Calvin: "Though such knowledge may appear, at first sight, easy of attainment, yet if any one will consider, more attentively, how prone the minds of men are to distrust and impious doubts, he will readily understand how profitable it is to have our faith strengthened by this testimony, that God is not fallacious, and does not beguile us with empty words, nor does he unduly laud his own power and goodness, but that he simply offers in his word, what, in reality, he is willing to bestow. There is no one, indeed, who would not willingly profess to go along with David in what he here delivers, that the words of God are pure; but those who, in ease and retirement, are loudest in extolling the word of God, when matters come to serious conflict, though they dare not openly spout blasphemies against God, yet often insinuate a charge of bad faith. For whenever he delays to help us, we consider his fidelity at fault, and forthwith begin to cry out, as if we had been defrauded." Luther remarks: "It is not necessary, by God's words, to understand only such as are taken from scripture into the mouth; but also what God speaks through men, whatsoever it may be, and whether the speaker be learned or unlearned, also what he spake through his apostles, not recorded in scripture, and what he still speaks from day to day, through his own people." In the general this is quite correct. The praise of God's word is here, indeed, immediately occasioned by an inward oracle, which the righteous received, and which was designed to serve the purpose of leading him to grasp, with firm faith, the substance

of what should be again repeated to every one that reads the Psalm. We must, therefore, comprehend under the words of God, those also of which Paul Gerhard sings: "His spirit often speaks to my spirit in sweet consoling strains," &c. It is not, however, to be forgotten, that these internal speeches, now that scripture exists, always rise upon its foundation, as here the word of the Lord in ver. 5, is only a special application of the promises of the law to the righteous.

Ver. 7. *Thou, O Lord, shalt keep them,* thy people suffering wrongfully.—Luther, incorrectly: Be pleased to keep them. The connection demands the expression of firm hope, not of a wish.—*Thou shalt preserve him against this generation for ever.* The singular suffix is to be explained as a personification. In order to mark the contrast more pointedly between the pious and the ungodly, and to indicate that it is not of certain individuals against certain others, the pious is often set in opposition to the ungodly, the righteous to the wicked, the former as the object of Divine oversight, the latter as the object of Divine punishment. The מִן הַדּוֹר זֶה is not: from this sort of men; but: from this generation. Calvin: "We collect from this, that the age was so corrupt, that David could, by way of reproach, throw the whole, as it were, into one bundle." This exposition has the common usage on its side, and perfectly agrees with the general spread of corruption, as represented in ver. 1. It affords a far greater contrast than the other, presenting the small number of pious men on the one side, and, on the other, the immense mass of the ungodly, who form, as it were, the whole present generation, the bearers of the spirit of the age, —a contrast which springs out of the constitution of human nature, and has given rise to the prevailing use in the New Testament of κόσμος, in opposition to the chosen. The signification of κόσμος, Koester would here attribute to עולם. He renders: Thou wilt keep them before the race, which the world loves. But the word *never* has that signification, it never means the world, but always eternity, and לעולם is always used adverbially, *for ever.*

Ver. 8. *The wicked walk round about,* they have encompassed the righteous on all hands, so that without God's help deliverance is impossible, comp. Psalm iii. 6. *As elevation is depression to the sons of men, i. e.* although now the righteous are overborne by the wicked, yet their distress is to be regarded in

the light of prosperity, because God forsakes not his own, but will richly recompense them for the sufferings they have endured. The sense requires that a *but* should be inserted before the second member. רם, elevation, is inf. nominascens. The meaning of זלת, which occurs only here, cannot be doubtful. זלל has just one and the same meaning in all the Semitic dialects. In the Chal., according to Buxtorf, it signifies, vilescere, vilipendi, despici, ut Hebr. קלה et קלל, quibus quandoque respondet. In Arabic ذل abjectus, vilis, despectus fuit. In Hebr. זוֹלל, the little-worth, stands opposed, in Jer. xv. 19, to יקר, the precious; the same word denotes, in Deut. xxi. 28, &c., a man of low manners. The Niph. of the verb occurs in Isa. lxiv. 2, in the sense of being lowered, despised. So that זלת can signify nothing else than humiliation, contempt, just as the Chald. זלותא, vilitas, despectus. This signification, as it is the only one grounded in the language, so it is specially recommended by the contrast with רם, which is perfectly obvious, and which all other expositions leave unnoticed. The sense of *terror*, which Gesenius and Hitzig give to the word, is unsupported and unsuitable. Still more so is that of *storm*, which Maurer adopts. The greater part of expositors follow Kimchi in their explanation of this hemistic, who thinks that כרם is put for כרמם; it is then rendered: as they are exalted, it is a reproach to the children of men. But this exposition cannot be at all grammatically justified, since, for such an omission of the suffix, no analogous example can anywhere be produced. This view is also confirmed by the consideration, that the repetition of the complaint, upon the power of the ungodly, without any mention being made of hope in the Lord's assistance, to which the righteous looks for consolation, would here be unsuitable, the conclusion would be a quite unsatisfactory one, we should be compelled to wish it away. The same reason decides also against the exposition of J. H. Michaelis and Umbreit: "When scorn exalts itself among men," and against that also of Ewald, which is similar in meaning: "So soon as baseness exalts itself;" and it is further to be objected to the latter, that זלת cannot signify *baseness*, and that רום does not mean to exalt itself, or to prosper, but to be high,—which latter difficulty is shunned by Luther, though following the same exposition, by his rendering: Where such wicked people reign among men. According to our exposition, the conclusion of the Psalm gathers

up, in a short enigmatic declaration, the substance of the whole of it. The depression to which the righteous have sunk, through the hostilities of the wicked, is like their elevation. For, as sure as there is a God in heaven, their suffering is a prediction of their joy, their contempt of their honour. So that they may quietly look on at all the machinations of malice.

PSALM XIII.

The Psalmist complains of his great distress upon earth, while in heaven he seemed to be forgotten, ver. 1 and 2. He prays the Lord for help, ver. 3, 4, and is revived by the assurance he obtains of it, ver. 5, 6.

The Psalm contains no indication, from which the time of its composition might be more exactly determined. This justifies us here also in supposing, that the Psalm was not, at some future period, first devoted to the general use, but that David originally composed it with this design. Already did Luther understand it of every pious man, who was persecuted as David was. The general character of this Psalm, as well as of many others, is falsely represented by Jarchi, Kimchi, and De Wette, who refer it to the whole Israelitish people. Of national enemies, too, there is no trace whatever to be found here. As throughout the Psalm, a single individual comes into view, it cannot be doubted that he is described from the soul of suffering individuals, oppressed by personal enemies, unless it could be proved on definite grounds, that the people are here personified as an individual. Such grounds, however, have no existence.

The situation is that of one who, through lengthened persecutions and continued withdrawal of Divine help, has been brought to the limits of despair, and is plunged in deadly sorrow. This particular feature of the Psalm may be recognised in the four times repeated question, *how long?* States of mind, such as those here described, must often have crept upon David in the later periods of the Sauline persecution, and with the consolation which he experienced under them he here comforts his brethren.

Ver. 1. *How long, O Lord, wilt thou continually forget me? How long hidest thou thy face from me?* The נֵצַח, according

to the most obvious exposition, marks the uninterruptedness, and consequently the entireness of the forgetting. The Psalmist's darkness was enlightened by no ray of Divine favour, his misery had no lucid intervals. This exposition is confirmed by the corresponding יומם, *daily*, in ver. 2. It may be doubted, however, whether the נצח and the לנצח, which occurs in parallel passages (Ps. lxxix. 5, "how long, O Lord, wilt thou be angry," לנצח, and again in Ps. lxxiv. 10, lxxxix. 46), can signify *continually*, in the sense of constant, uninterrupted, as it rather appears to mean *continually*, in the sense of *for ever*—comp. especially ix. 18, "for the needy shall not alway be forgotten, the expectation of the meek shall not perish for ever," where לנצח is a parallelism with לעד, and where obviously the discourse is of a final forgetting. It is the more natural to think of such an one here as the sufferer, according to ver. 3, "lighten mine eyes that I sleep not unto death," believed himself to have reached the last stage, and prayed God that he would still rescue him from the gates of death. Now, if we ascribe a decided meaning to this doubt in the exposition we give, we must render the clause: how long wilt thou forget me for ever. The weak man, who is always inclined to estimate the grace of God according to his own feeling and experience, is prone, in *every* suffering, to give himself to despair concerning it, to regard himself as wholly and irrecoverably lost. But when a hard and oppressive cross has been appointed, as is the case here, the flesh cries out in the most vehement manner that he has been for ever forgotten. On the other hand, however, the Spirit raises its protest; faith lays hold of this, that the poor shall not alway be forgotten. This conflict in the feelings of the sufferer discovers itself also in his address to God; for he prays God still, at length, to restore to him the favour which appearances seemed to show, and the flesh cried out, had completely gone. The sense is quite correctly given by Muis: thou showest thyself to me such as if thou hadst entirely forgotten me. Calvin: "It is not in a human way, or from natural feelings, we recognise in our misery that God cares for us, but by faith we apprehend his invisible providence. So David, as far as he could gather from the actual state of things, seemed to himself to be deserted by God. Still, however, having previously enjoyed the light of faith, he penetrated, with the eye of his mind, into the hidden grace of God; else how should he have directed his

groans and desires to him?" Luther: "He therefore paints this most pungent and bitter grief of mind in the most graphic words, as one that feels he has to do with a God alienated from him, hostile, unappeasable, inexorable, and for ever angry. . For here hope itself despairs, and despair hopes notwithstanding, and there only lives the unutterable groaning with which the Holy Spirit intercedes in us, Rom. viii. 26, who moved upon the darkness which covered the waters, as is said at the beginning of Genesis. This no one understands who has not tasted it." Luther also perceived what emphasis lies in the repetition of the "how long," with which the sufferer introduces his "four bitter and violent complaints:" "In Hebrew the word how long is four times repeated without alteration; instead of which, however, the Latin translator has substituted another word at the third repetition, because he wished to make some variation. But we would rather preserve the simplicity of the Hebrew dialect, because, by the fourfold use of the same word, it seeks to express the affection of the prophet, and the impressiveness of which is weakened by the change adopted by the Latin interpreter." The Psalm is prepared for those who have been sighing under long distress, and in the one expression, how long, we discover, in a manner, its whole nature.

Ver. 2. *How long must I take counsel in my soul, sorrow in my heart daily?* The expression of *putting* or *laying counsels* has something strange in it. The simplest mode of explaining it is by taking the *laying* as equal to *laying down*, as in Ex. x. 1, "That I may lay (put down) these my signs in the midst of thee." The soul and heart appears as a store-room, which is entirely filled with counsels and sorrows. The sense of the words: how long must I take counsels, is: how long wilt thou leave me to myself—how long must I weary myself in finding a way of escape from this misery and distress, from which thou couldst so easily deliver me? We have here very strikingly pourtrayed the mental condition of a man who harasses himself in helpless embarrassment by seeking for counsel, falling sometimes upon this, sometimes upon that plan, and then giving them all up again in utter despondency, because he sees them to be all unavailing. This disquiet, which arises in us whenever the Lord turns away his face from us when in trouble, the sufferer considers as his greatest evil. Luther: "When the unhappy man finds that God feels toward him in the manner described, it then

happens to him as follows:—That is, his heart is as a raging sea, in which all sorts of counsels move up and down; he tries on all hands to find a hole through which he can make his escape; he thinks on various plans, and still is utterly at a loss what to advise." What is implied in taking or forming counsels, David knew well in his own experience, especially during the persecution of Saul, when hunted by his enemies "like a partridge upon the mountains," he sought refuge, sometimes upon the hill-tops, sometimes among the Moabites, sometimes among the Philistines; and amid all the projects which he fell upon for his deliverance, the mournful reflection still forces itself back upon him, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." The sufferer was pained, not merely for his outward trouble, but still more for this, that God seemed to have turned away his face from him, after having promised him his favour and assistance. This was the proper sting of his pain, the beating pulse in his misery. Many render יומם improperly: "the whole day," giving it the force of יומם ולילה. The day, in its more extended signification, comprehends also the night. The word here means, not merely by day, but also daily, comp. Ez. xxx. 16. "Just as diu in Latin connects itself with dies," Ewald. This signification does not certainly belong to the common usage, occurring, as it does, only in poetry, and even there only in two places. *How long shall mine enemy exalt himself over me?*

Ver. 3. The prayer stands in immediate connection with the complaint. Luther: "He here sets something over against each of the preceding points. He had complained of four evil things, therefore he begs for four sorts of good." To the *forgetting* and the *hiding* of the countenance stand opposed the *looking* and *hearing*, to the counsels and sorrow the lightening of the eyes, and to this: How long must mine enemy exalt himself over me, reference is made in ver. 4. The Psalmist, however, has avoided all monotony; in the three first petitions the reference is only in the matter, and never verbally expressed; and in the fourth, even the form of a petition is abandoned. *Look hither.* This is set against the hiding of the face, of which the Psalmist complains in the first verse. "So long (remarks Calvin) as God does not actually stretch out his hand to help us, the flesh cries out that his eyes are shut." *Hear me, O Lord, my God, enlighten mine eyes.* These words are explained by

Luther thus: "As soon as the face of God is turned away from us, presently follows consternation, distraction, darkness in the understanding, and uncertainty of counsel, so that we grope, as it were in midnight, and seek everywhere how we may find an escape. Therefore, when the Lord lifts upon us the light of his countenance, and turns his face toward us, listening to our cry, then are our eyes again enlightened, and we have no difficulty in obtaining counsel." But, that this exposition is not right, that the enlightening of the eyes here is not *spiritually*, but is to be understood in the proper sense, with special reference to "the sorrow in my heart" in ver. 2, is evident from the following words: *So that I sleep not unto death.* In the man who is oppressed with sorrow, the feeble and dying, the eyes, which reflect the power of life, are dim; hence, to "enlighten the eyes" is as much as to give the vital spark, as Calvin already properly remarks. The passage 1 Sam. xiv. throws light on this. The eyes of Jonathan, who was faint almost to death, were covered with darkness; but after he had tasted the honeycomb, his eyes see, according to ver. 27, (where the Ketib alone is right) and are enlightened, אוֹרוּ, according to ver. 29. In Ezra ix. 8, the words, "enlighten our eyes," stand in connection with, "give us a reviving." The Psalmist here, then, represents himself as a dying man, as one already half gone, who should soon have been wholly overwhelmed with the darkness of death, if the Lord had not given him new power of life, set him free from consuming grief and sorrow, by granting him deliverance, and so prevented his threatening dissolution. Ewald exclaims: "Pity that we could not more exactly determine the history." But with this, after the remarks made in the introduction, we cannot sympathize. The feeling which is here expressed is not so very singular a one, as to need explanation from the facts of history. How many souls, driven to the verge of death, have found in this verse the record of their own experience!—Nay, who that has been exercised to the cross, has not already passed through such experience!—It is also against all experience to maintain, that such a state of feeling implies him who is conscious of it, to be looking to this earthly life as his farthest boundary.—*To sleep to death*, a bold poetical connection for: To sleep the sleep of death; com. Jer. li. 39, 57, where sleeping an eternal sleep occurs. Ewald, p. 591.

Ver. 4. *Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him.*

יכלתיו from יכל, potuit, must stand, according to many, for יכלתי לו; but this is wrong, if understood so, that the suff. accus. marks precisely the dative. The construction with the accus., instead of the common one with ל, is rather to be explained out of a modification of the meaning of the verb, to overcome any one.—*Mine adversaries rejoice not, when I fail.* The sufferer says, that it were unworthy of God to give his servant as an occasion of mirth to the ungodly, who were just watching for his fall, to rail at it. He proceeds, therefore, on this principle, that it is God's peculiar business to check the wantonness of sinners, as often as they boast of having conquered his people, and through them himself.

Ver. 5, 6. The Lord imparts to the Psalmist, and through him to all who are found in similar situations; or, rather, he imparts to the righteous sufferer the assurance of his favour and assistance.—*And I trust in thy goodness, my heart rejoices in thy salvation; I will sing to the Lord, for he has dealt bountifully with me.*—ויגל, not as many: will rejoice, but, would rejoice, as this is the form which lies near to the Fut. apocop. standing for the optative, comp. Ewald, p. 527, and as it is quite suitable to the following, "I will sing." The Psalmist declares his wish and resolution, that his heart might give thanks to God for his salvation, which, as already secured to him, he sees with the eye of faith as actually present. In this wish lies enclosed, at the same time, the certainty and greatness of the salvation. The exultation of the righteous man's heart stands opposed to that of the enemies, ver. 4. The object in which the affection of joy rests is marked by ב. The pret. גמל is to be explained from the faith, which sees what is not as if it were. Luther, whom most expositors follow, renders: "That he deals so well toward me;" and this exposition is right, and decidedly to be preferred to the other: That he recompenses me. Comp. upon גמל, to give, with על, to give to, on Ps. vii. 4.

PSALM XIV.

The Psalmist begins with a lamentation regarding the frightful power and extent of corruption reigning in the world, ver. 1—3. But the righteous, who have much to suffer on account of sin, must not therefore despair. As sure as there is a God in

heaven, they shall bring upon themselves destruction. From the watch-tower of faith, the Psalmist looks forward with triumphant joy to the overthrow of impiety, and the establishment of righteousness, ver. 4—6. He closes with the wish, that the Lord, by fulfilling his purpose, would send salvation and deliverance to his people, and thereby give occasion to grateful joy, ver. 7.

In the first part, the complaint treats of the corruption of the world by itself, without respect to the sufferings which thence arise to the "generation of the righteous." But that the complaint really stands in close connection with these,—that the Psalmist delineates the corruption of the world with respect to the difficult and apparently hopeless condition, which should thereby be prepared for the righteous, is evident from the second part, which is occupied throughout, not with the judgments themselves coming upon the wicked world, after the manner of the prophets, but with these, only in so far as they might serve to bring salvation to the righteous, and rescue them from the clutches of the wicked. Hence, the purport of the Psalm is quite similar to that of Ps. xii.; it is designed to administer consolation to the righteous under the troubles which come upon them from beholding the corruption of the world, the ascendancy of wickedness, which appears to threaten their entire destruction. Should even the whole world be given up to corruption, and be in league against them, they may still comfort themselves with the thought, that God overcomes the world. Along with this, however, the Psalm carries a powerful warning to the ungodly. And that this is not to be excluded, may be learned from the superscription, were there nothing else, of the corresponding 53d Psalm.

The absence of all special allusions renders it certain, that this Psalm also, like the many nearly related ones immediately preceding, was from the first destined by David for the general use of the church. As regards those who call forth the complaint of the Psalm, and against whom the Lord is entreated, the reference of the Psalm is just as wide as the designation, "children of men," can make it. Whether the corrupt children of men belonged outwardly to the people of God, or not, makes no difference. The former were not proper members of his church. In the Pentateuch, the standing form in reference to evil-doers is, "their soul is cut off from among their people,"

it is ipso facto separated, belongs no longer to the people of God, although the theocratic government might fail in power and will to make good in an external way also the separation, as was constantly, for example, in Deut. xiii. 5, enjoined in these words, "so shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee." From this we can have no doubt how the contrast between עמי and עמו, in ver. 4, 7, in respect to the children of men, is to be understood. The contrast is that of the righteous generation against a corrupt world, as it has existed in all ages, and will continue even to the end of the present constitution of things. De Wette and others would refer the Psalm exclusively to the relation of Israel in regard to its heathenish oppressors. That the first part is unfavourable to this hypothesis, De Wette himself is forced to admit. Ver. 1—3, he remarks, "has quite the appearance of a general moral representation." Of a special reference to the heathen, there does not exist the smallest trace. It is not heathenish, but human corruption, that is described. To this also points the reference, which the description carries to Gen. vi. 12, "And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth," comp. v. 5, "And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth." This primary delineation bears not upon the heathen, but generally upon mankind. How little the prophets and sacred bards were disposed to confine the corruption merely to the heathen, and exempt Israel from it, might be shown by a great multitude of passages; but we shall produce only one, in which what is here said of the whole world is just as expressly said of Israel, Jer. v. 1, "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find one, if there be one that executeth judgment and striveth after integrity, and I will pardon it." That no advantage arises in favour of this supposition from the words in ver. 4, "who eat up my people like bread," even De Wette is obliged to admit. He says, "The oppressors spoken of in ver. 4 could certainly be found among the Israelites." That this not merely *could* be done, but that the internal oppressors *must* not be excluded, appears from the following passage in Micah, which refers exclusively to the internal relations, iii. 2, 3, "who also eat the flesh of my people," &c., which obviously has respect to the expression of the Psalmist, and in which the prophet comments upon it, drawing out into particulars what is here indicated only in the general.

Comp. also the passage in Prov. xxx. 14, which likewise refers to enemies of a domestic character, "There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men." De Wette rests his view entirely upon ver. 7, conceiving that the wish there expressed for the return of the captives, points to an oppression of a political nature, and most naturally to that of the exiles under the Chaldeans. But our exposition will prove, that the Psalm contains not a word of returning from captivity, but only expresses in the general a wish, that God would have compassion on the misery of his people, whether that might be inflicted by an internal, or by a foreign hand.

Other expositors, as Stier, have been led, in opposition to the view above noticed, to maintain the position, that the Psalm refers merely to the internal conflict between the righteous and the wicked—that the human corruption, described in ver. 1—3, is such only as manifested itself in Israel,—that the evil-doers, who ate up the people as bread, are to be sought only in Israel, and that it is only the wicked in Israel, against whom destruction is threatened, and from whom the righteous are to have deliverance. But this view is just as arbitrary as the other; the contrast throughout is that of the corrupt world and the righteous generation, and as this contrast came also palpably out in what "the chosen" among Israel had to suffer from heathen malice, one cannot perceive with what justice this relation should be excluded.

The fatal: either—or, an internal opposition, or a relation to external, heathen oppressors, must in short be abandoned; we must not always proceed on the supposition, that the one or the other alone must necessarily have place. The men of God, elevated by his Spirit above the mere national platform, contemplated the heathenish and Israelitish wickedness as one whole, without suffering themselves to be deceived by the difference of costume. So also everywhere Moses, to whose command, "thou shalt not have diverse weights in thy bag," this here corresponds. Comp. for example, Deut. xxxii.

From the preceding remarks, it is manifest that, with perfect propriety, Paul adduces, in Rom. iii. 10—12, a proof from this Psalm of the scripturalness of his position, that "Jews and heathens are all under sin." He justly puts this passage, ver. 1—3, at the head of his proof, for the Old Testament contains no pas-

sage in which the universality and depth of the human corruption is painted in such vivid colours.

What has been alleged against the Davidic origin of the Psalm proceeds entirely on a false understanding of ver. 7.

This Psalm recurs once again, with certain alterations, in Ps. liii. These alterations, (with the exception, perhaps, of the omission of the "all," in ver. 4), bear altogether the same character,—everywhere, in Ps. liii., is the rare, the uncommon, the strong, and the elevated, substituted for the common and the simple. The consideration of the particulars will show this. The simple superscription of the xiv. "to the chief musician of David," is enlarged in the liii. by a twofold addition, and these additions both possess the character now mentioned. First, in regard to עַל־מָחֲלַת. That nothing is to be made out of these words, viewed in the way they have hitherto been, as marking an instrument or a melody, the remark of Ewald, (*Poet. Books*, P. i. p. 174), may suffice to show: "a word, on the meaning of which nothing whatever can be said." We conceive that the words contain an enigmatical description of the subject and object, and translate: upon sickness. This view is justified, 1. By its being the only one admissible in a grammatical point of view. The verb in Hebrew has no other signification than to be weak, sick, and the very nearly related forms מַחֲלֶה and מַחֲלָה occur in the sense of sickness. Even could it be shown that מחלת cannot always bear this signification, it were still quite arbitrary to explain it out of the Ethiopian. 2. In the superscription of Ps. lxxxviii., where the same words are again used, they are connected with לְעַנּוֹת, which, according to the usage, and the עֻנִּיתָ, affligis, in ver. 7, and the עָנִי, in ver. 9, can only be expounded: regarding the tribulation, thus admirably comporting with: upon sickness. The common exposition: for the singing, must be abandoned as arbitrary. 3. The words, rendered as we have done, suit exceedingly well the purport of the Psalms which they designate. Psalm liii. is taken up with the spiritual sickness of the sons of men. Psalm lxxxviii. is the prayer of one visited by severe bodily sickness.—The second addition in the superscription is מַשְׂכִּיל, a didactic Psalm, (comp. on Psalm xxxii.) This designation has been chosen with distinct reference to ver. 2. The Psalm aims at bringing the un-

reasonable, who are there discoursed of, to sound reason. In the Psalm itself there is a pervading change in the substitution of Elohim everywhere for Jehovah. The reason of that is the following: It is not to be doubted that even in Psalm xiv. the sevenfold use of the name of God, (thrice Elohim, and four times Jehovah,) is not accidental, especially when the corresponding sevenfold number of the verses is taken into account, which it is the evident purpose to have preserved also in Psalm liii. where the extended superscription forms itself into a verse, while there is found in ver. 6, (in Heb.) thrown into one verse, what in Psalm xiv. forms two; and when we take into account, also, analogies, as that in Psalm xxix., where קול יהוה recurs seven times. Now, while in Psalm xiv. the predominating interest showed itself in the different names of God being used according to their different meanings, in Psalm liii. the other interest prevailed, which sought to render palpable the design of the sevenfold repetition by uniformity of the name,—a design which was the more visibly accomplished, as the *Elohim* in some of its connections,—for example, "they call not upon Elohim," —sounds rather oddly.—In Psalm liii. ver. 1, עול, crime, is substituted for עלילה, deed. The "deed" is justified by the contrast with speaking in the heart; apart from this important reference, עול, as being the stronger, is, at the same time, the more characteristic; so that here, as is the case also in the other verses, each of the readings has its peculiar advantage. In ver. 3, נלו is first substituted for the simple and also clear הכל, while it is not quite certain how the suffix should be explained. Then, instead of the common סר, the very rare סג is substituted, which elsewhere occurs only twice in Kal, where a word is manifestly chosen, on account of its being, both in writing and pronunciation, as similar as possible to the other,—just as Jeremiah appears fond of substituting words similarly written and spoken, to those of the original; comp. Küper Ierem. libr. sacr. interpres. p. 14. In ver. 5, for, "there were they in great fear," we have, still with the view of enlarging and deepening the picture, "where no fear," added; and instead of the plain words, "for God is in the generation of the righteous," are put the far more emphatic and highly poetical ones, "for God scatters the bones of him who encamps against thee," prop. of thy besieger. So also in ver. 6, the statement "only put to shame the counsel of the poor, for God is his refuge," which stands, so

to speak, on the defensive, is supplanted in Psalm liii. by another plainly offensive, and, as the form of address itself shows, much more lively, "thou dost put to shame, for God rejects them." Finally, in ver. 7, for the singular ישועת, the rarer and more emphatic plural is substituted.

From the representation now given, it is clear that we can never adopt any such account of the origin of the variations in the two Psalms, as that espoused by Ewald, who supposes a reader to have rectified for himself the text, as well as he could, from a manuscript that had become illegible. It is not less clear, that the variations could not have sprung from traditional usage. They all belong to one author, who made them with careful consideration. That it was David himself, the superscription in Psalm liii. appears to indicate, which ascribes the Psalm also in that form of it to him; and yet it will be impossible, perhaps, to bring forward any well-grounded proof of it.

When the collectors gave a place to both forms, the original and the changed, they certainly acted in the mind of the author of the changes himself, who did not intend by his form, to set aside the other, but only claimed for it a place beside the other. Each of the two forms has its peculiar beauties and characteristics, and it is most justly remarked by Venema, that "no variation occurs, which does not provide a sense excellent in both Psalms, and suited to the scope."

Ver. 1. *The fool speaks in his heart, God is not*—not: it is only the fool that speaks in his heart, whosoever speaks thus in his heart is a fool, but: the whole world is replenished with fools, who speak, or, the fools, of whom the world is full, speak. The Psalmist marks the reigning folly first, after its internal root in the mind, (Muis: orditur a fonte omnium scelerum impietate,) and then passes on to describe its manifestations in deed. נבל stands here in its original signification, which, indeed, it never loses, if we examine carefully. For, even when it is used of *crimes*, these are still always contemplated in the light of folly. David designates those who, with a renunciation of all fear of God, give themselves up to unrighteousness, as *blinded fools*, in silent contrast to the judgment of the world, and their own, which magnifies them as great spirits, and people of distinguished prudence. That נבל stands here in its original signification appears also from the expression in ver. 4, "know they not," which refers back to this. Their whole course is *folly*, because

it proceeds upon the supposition that God is not, does not see and recompense. It is not less apparent from the opposite משכיל in ver. 2, and from the designation of the Psalm as משכיל in Ps. liii. The fools ought by this Psalm to be made wise. It is, therefore, quite wrong, when De Wette renders נבל by *ungodly*, and when Sachs, in bad taste also, does it by *the rogue*. The pious and godly of Scripture is, at the same time, the wise man, because his frame of mind and his conduct proceed upon a right insight into the nature of things, and draws them as consequences after it. But for this very reason, the piety and godliness of Scripture are not variable ideas, but the boundaries of both, and the qualities opposed to them continue always strongly marked. The discourse here is not of the atheism of the understanding, but of the atheism of the heart, (he speaks *in his heart*,) the region of which is infinitely great, as that also of the former is, with which the world is well nigh swallowed up, although the number of its theoretical deniers of God is but small, and with which also the righteous has constantly to fight. Luther: "The prophet speaks here in the Spirit, sees no person in an outward point of view, treads upon the ground of the reins and hearts, and says: The fool speaks, there is no God, not with the mouth, gesture, appearance, and other external signs, for in such respects he often boasts before the lovers of God, that he knows God—but in *heart*, that is, in his inward sentiments. These in the ungodly are deluded, and thence presently follows blindness of understanding, so that he can neither think rightly of God, nor speak, nor direct his conduct properly. Accordingly, those alone have God, who do not believe in God with hypocritical faith. All besides are fools, and say in their hearts: there is no God."

They are corrupt, abominable in their actions, there is none that does good. The relation of this second part to the first was already explained quite correctly by Luther, according to whom "the other evil" is here described, "which is a flowing stream, issuing with force out of the spring of unbelief." Atheism of the heart has corruption of life for its inseparable attendant. It is a question how עלילה, and the corresponding עול in Ps. liii., is to be construed, whether, with most expositors, as an accus. governed by השחיתו and התעיבו, they make their conduct corrupt, abominable, or as as a mere appended accus. which defines more narrowly the sphere of the two verbs,

as to action, crime, (on such accusatives, see Ewald, Small Gr. § 512,) as already Luther here: with their conduct, in Ps. liii.: in their bad conduct. For the latter construction there is, first of all, the circumstance, that the contrast between actions and heart, which the Psalmist obviously had in view, and for expressing which עֲלִילָה is used, becomes more prominent. Then, according to the other construction, we should have expected the plural with the suff., instead of the sing. without the suff., —comp. הִשְׁחִיתוּ עֲלִילוֹתָם in Zeph. iii. 7. It is also a confirmation of the same view, that הִשְׁחִית has an accus. after it only as an exception; in the rule it stands absolutely in the sense of *acting corruptly*—comp. upon this and similar verbs in Hiph., Ewald, p. 189; but הִתְעִיב, in the only two other places where it occurs, 1 Kings xxi. 26, Ez. xvi. 52, has the signification of *acting abominably*, not of *making abominable*. עָוֶל also, injustice, crime, does not well suit with either of the verbs in the sense of corrupting, making abominable. That הִשְׁחִיתוּ alludes to Gen. vi. 12, where the corruption of men before the flood is denoted by the same word, of that we can entertain the less doubt, as in ver. 2 a still more manifest reference is found to that passage. Luther: "He describes the race of the ungodly as equally corrupt then with what they were at that time." The preterites in this verse, and the following one, are to be understood just as in Ps. xi. 4, x. 3, and to be rendered by the present. The sense and the connection of the Psalm are quite destroyed, if we translate with Ewald and Hitzig: he spoke, &c.

Ver. 2. *The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, that he may see whether there be one that behaves himself wisely, that seeks God.* That David represents the Lord as looking down from heaven, and finding no fearer of God on the earth, is done on a double account. First, the greatness and universality of the reigning corruption are thereby well brought out. Not merely the short-sighted eye of man, but God's all-seeing, all-penetrating glance, can find no piety upon earth. Michaelis: Ex infallibili dei judicio et scrutinio. This reference is the leading one. But, at the same time, by way of contrast to the delusion of those forgetters of God, who would shut him up in heaven, and not let him trouble himself with earthly things, the representation points to the fact, that his all-ruling providence is ever active, that he continually looks out from the high watch-

tower, the heavens, upon the actions of men, in order to hurl down, in his own time, judgments upon the wicked—a truth full of consolation to the fearers of God, full of terror to the ungodly. According to the latter reference, the clause, "The Lord looks down from heaven," forms a contrast to that, "The fool saith in his heart, there is no God," and prepares for the catastrophe described in ver. 4—6. Both references were noticed by Luther: "This is spoken against the folly of fools, who say that there is no God. As if he would say: There is not only a God, but also a God who sees, nay, who sees all, *i. e.* he penetrates all with his eye, there is nothing too far removed, or too deeply concealed, which he cannot grasp. Next to this, that no one might think that these fools, and such as corrupt their ways, were only a handful of people, among whom alone none was to be found who does good, he therefore extends his declaration far and wide to all, when he says: The Lord looked down from heaven, from thence he beholds all people upon earth, and from him no one is concealed. So that respect is had to Gen. vi. 12, where the whole earth is said to be corrupt." Besides this passage, there are two others, which come into view as a type of the representation given—the first of which is Gen. xi. 5, "And the Lord came down from heaven to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded," from which the expression, "children of men," seems to have been derived; and the other is Gen. xviii. 21. Very suitably is Elohim, whose existence the ungodly deny, made to pass into Jehovah, who looks down from heaven. They deny, forsooth, the being of a God altogether; but there is a living, and in the highest sense personal God, who lives and beholds. משכיל, one who acts prudently, forms the contrast to: they act corruptly, abominably, just as: God looks down to see, stands in opposition to the fool, who says: there is no God; so that in this way the order of the first verse is here reversed. משכיל signifies, not *to be prudent*, and still less *to be pious*, but is always used of the conduct, to *act prudently, reasonably*. The wicked man, while following, instead of the law of God, his own perverse inclinations and desires, treads reason under foot by his actions, does in his waywardness what profits not, and what hands him over to destruction. That the very common phrase, דרש אלהים, can only signify: *to seek God*, is clear from the counter expression of *finding* in Deut. iv. 29, "Thou shalt find the Lord, if thou seek him with all thy heart

and with all thy soul," comp. Jer. xxix. 13, 2 Chron. xv. 2. To seek God marks the desire of the heart toward him, the longing directed upon him. The wicked do not seek God; they flee and shun him as their greatest enemy; but whosoever does not seek him, him he seeks with his punishment. The Elohim has here already acquired the nature of a proper name. Hence the את, though the article is awanting. This particle never occurs except before definite nouns. The examples of the contrary, which Ewald still retains, drop away on closer examination.

Ver. 3. *All are gone away, they are together corrupt, there is not that does good, not even one.* It may be asked, how this charge of a corruption, extending through the *whole* of humanity, can be reconciled with ver. 5, where mention is made of a righteous generation. This can only be accounted for by the supposition, that the view of the monstrous corruption, which had spread itself among men, led the author to overlook the few righteous persons, so that his words are to be taken with some limitation, as is done by himself in what follows. Comp. what we have already said on a quite similar statement in Ps. xii. Others, as Calvin, understand by the "children of men," ver. 2, the whole of humanity in its natural condition, as opposed to the children of God, who, through the Spirit, have been delivered from the general corruption. But it is quite improbable, that the expression, "children of men," should be used in this sense without being made plain by the contrast. In regard to the substance, this view is certainly the correct one; for the few righteous persons, whom the Psalmist excepts from the corrupt mass, have become so by the grace of God. Besides, this must have been the case with proportionally very few, otherwise the Psalmist could not have represented the corruption as so all-pervading. Luther: "See how many redundant words he uses, that he may comprehend all men in the charge, and except none. First he says *all*, afterwards once and again, that there is not so much as one." There is an emphasis in the הכל, the allness; the whole of humanity is, as it were, a corrupt mass. The going away receives its more immediate determination by the contrast in which it stands with "seeking the Lord," just as the being corrupt, and the not doing good, forms the contrast to משכיל. In the delineation of the fool, godliness and immoral conduct are constantly linked together, and in such a way, indeed, that the next pair always begins with the same member with which the preceding one had closed. The acting prudently, an-

swers to the acting corruptly—the all going away, to the seeking of God—the evil-doers, who eat up my people, to the being corrupt, and no one doing good. The last member of the description: They call not upon the Lord, corresponds to the first: He says in his heart, There is no God. The whole chain is broken, if to the words, "all are gone away," we supply, instead of God, from the right way.—אָלַח, originally *to be sour, to corrupt*, here as in Job xv. 16, in a moral sense. At the end of this verse, some critical helps, in particular the Cod. Vat., the LXX., and Vulgate, introduce a longer addition, which manifestly owes its origin to Rom. iii. 13—18. There other declarations from the Old Testament, bearing on the same subject, are added to the citation made from our Psalm. And while it has been overlooked, that the Apostle does not confine his citations to our Psalm, but professes to give passages of Scripture in general, it has been thought that an addition should be made to the Psalm from his authority.

Ver. 4. *Know not, then, all evil-doers, who eat my people as bread, who call not upon the Lord.* The Psalmist begins the second part with an expression of wonder at the great blindness of the fools, who do not see what lies before their eyes, and what is brought out in lively colours in ver. 5 and 6. The designation of the fools as evil-doers, who eat up the people of God, and call not on the Lord, resumes the subject of ver. 1—3, but substitutes, at the very first mention of the badness of their actions generally, their shameful conduct toward the people of God, as the species in the genus, which came particularly under consideration, according to the design of the Psalm as unfolded in the introduction. The "all" appears only to serve the purpose of joining this to the preceding context, and because of little use, apart from this, it is dropt in Ps. liii.: Know not, then, all *those* evil-doers, that whole troop of miscreants. We must not, with Claus and others, take יֹדֵעַ precisely in the sense of "having right understanding," being wise and prudent. The object is rather left out in the pregnant speech, and is to be supplied from the context. This is everywhere, and without exception, the case, where the יֹדֵעַ appears to stand absolutely. Now, the deficiency here is to be supplied from that, which was already indicated in ver. 2, according to which the Lord from heaven looks upon all the children of men, and from what is expressly said in ver. 5, with which that here may be united by a colon. Quite correctly already Luther: "Will they then not

once perceive, that they are such people, as occasion sorrow to themselves." The question of wonder expresses the magnitude of their folly. The current exposition is: Will not the evil-doers *repent?* But, this exposition needs, in that case, a modification. ירע never signifies exactly to *suffer punishment,* but only to become wise through experience. Even in this sense, it is never used quite so absolutely as it would be here. Adopting it, we should have expected the fut. instead of the pret., which also, several expositors, after the example of the LXX. and Vulgate, would substitute here. And, finally, the first mentioned exposition is doubtless occasioned by the manifest reference of the expression: They know not, to that: the fool, in ver. 1.

Who eat up my people as bread. By עמי, the Psalmist means the people of God, who belong to him, in so far as he does to them. There is no ground for supposing, with Claus and others, that Jehovah speaks; the contrary seems to be implied by the Lord being spoken of in the third person in the last clause, as throughout the Psalm, indeed, he is nowhere introduced as speaking. In the parallel passage too, of Micah iii. 3, "Who also eat the flesh of my people," it is not Jehovah that speaks, but the prophet, and עמי occurs likewise of the people of the prophet twice in Isa. iii. 12. By naming the people *his* people, the Psalmist shows, how much he laid the shameful conduct of the wicked towards them to heart. In regard to the eating of the people, it is remarked by Augustine: "Those eat the people, who draw only profit from them, and who do not employ their station for the glory of God, and the salvation of those over whom they are placed." The expression, "as bread," indicates the heartless indifference of the eaters; he who eats bread, never thinks of doing any wrong by it. We must not expound in this sort of way: As they eat bread—which either requires us to supply כאשר, and that is not very happy, or supposes, that the comparison-clause has entirely disappeared;—on the contrary decides the קראו, which connects itself, not with אכלי, but with אכלו, and which requires us to conceive of אשר as standing before אכלי. We must rather expound: Who eating my people, eat bread, so that the people themselves are described as bread, namely, in a spiritual sense, what in spiritual things corresponds to bread. The exposition of Luther, Claus, and others: Eating my people, they eat food, they find nourishment therein, gives a tame meaning. The simple אכלו עמי

were then more expressive. Already did Calvin remark, that the matter in the verse suits still better to the degenerate members of the church of God, than to the heathenish enemies. The abominableness lay precisely in this, that the shepherds spared not their own flock, and that the subjects of Jehovah concerned not themselves about their king. The not calling upon God, is a description of ungodliness. For without calling upon God it is impossible to think of any fear of God. The Psalmist here connects impiety with unrighteousness toward men, as its inseparable attendant, as the latter indeed springs from the former by a sort of necessary relation. We have already pointed out, that the words, "They call not upon the Lord," corresponds to the earlier descriptions of ungodliness, through "saying in their heart, There is no God, not seeking God, and turning away from him."

Ver. 5. *There terror overtakes them; for God is among the righteous generation.* Instead of *there*, many put *then*, at the time when punishment alights on them. But the particle שם always denotes in Hebrew, the *place*, never, as in Arabic, the *time*. Others retain the usual signification of the word, and expound: *there*, in the very place where they have committed their crimes, shall their punishment surprise them. It is best explained by Calvin, who supposes that the Psalmist would here only mark the *certainty* of the punishment, while he points to it, as it were, with the finger. The שם, as well as the pret. פחדו, is a testimony to the strength of the Psalmist's faith, which placed the judgment that was to come on the wicked so vividly before his eyes, that it seemed as if it were actually present. The same strength of faith discovered itself also in the question of wonder: Know they not? in the preceding verse.—*For God is in the righteous generation*, he is found amongst them as helper and deliverer. Falsely, Luther: *But* God is in the righteous generation. God's being in the righteous generation, is the *ground* of the destruction, which he suspends over their oppressors. Hence also, we must not supply with Claus: but not with and among *them*, the ungodly.—After the words פחדו פחד, there is added in Psalm liii. פחד לא היה, where no fear was, *i. e.* in the midst of their prosperity, while in a human way, perhaps, nothing of the kind could have been looked for, suddenly. Venema: "Where they were securely indulging themselves, there they began

suddenly to be afraid, and so were unexpectedly overwhelmed." Others, incorrectly, and quite unsuitably to the context: they fall into a blind, groundless fear. The discourse here, is not of the remorse of conscience, but of divine judgments actually inflicted. We are not, therefore, to refer to such passages as Lev. xxvi. 17, 36; Prov. xxviii. 1, where God threatens the transgressors of his law, that they would flee when no one pursued them, would be frightened by the rustle of a falling leaf; but to such passages as Job xv. 21, "The sound of terrors is in his ears, in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him," and 1 Thess. v. 3, "When they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh on them." The sudden and unexpected nature of the destruction of the wicked, overtaking them while they are still in great prosperity, is constantly brought forward in the Psalms. It is further added in Psalm liii.: כִּי אֱלֹהִים פִּזַּר עַצְמוֹת חֹנֶךָּ, for God scatters the bones of those who encamp against thee, substituting these words for the last member of our verse. חֹנֶךָּ pausalf. for חֹנָךְ, of the besieging thee, is partic. of חנה to besiege. It is generally construed with עַל. The construction found here is to be explained thus, that חֹנֶה, he who encamps, stands for: the besieger; comp. קָמַי for קָמִים עָלַי in Psalm xviii. 39. The oppression of the pious, by the ungodly, appears here under the image of a siege, which God raises, by shattering the besieging enemies, so that their bones, formerly the seat of their strength, cover the field of battle. This addition renders unquestionable the soundness of the exposition given by us on the preceding words. For how could these supply the *ground* of what happens, on the supposition of its being an *ungrounded* fear that is spoken of? In the midst of their security, destruction overtakes them,—*for*, O righteous generation, God annihilates your adversaries. According to this view, the changes in Psalm liii. would not touch the essential meaning. The addition: where no fear was, serves only to complete the picture, and is in substance contained in the preceding words, where already the state of the ungodly is described as one of such perfect security, and untroubled prosperity, that they no longer thought there could be a God at all. And in the second member both Psalms contain the same fundamental thought, that God interposes for the good of his people, against the wicked, only in Psalm liii.

the destruction wrought in their behalf is delineated in striking colours. To the expression: he scatters the bones, there is a verbal paral. in Psalm cxli. 7.

Ver. 6. *Put only to shame the counsel of the poor, for God is his refuge.* The address is to the enemies. These the Psalmist admonishes not to triumph too hastily, if they should succeed in defeating the plans for delivering the oppressed servants of God. For such joy would soon be annihilated, as they have on their side a mighty helper, mightier than themselves. בוש in Hiph. to *shame*, to *put to shame*. Various render *mock* only, but this meaning is unwarranted. That the כי is not, after Luther's example, to be explained by *but*, is obvious, and, consequently, it is certain that we must render, not: ye shame, but: shame only, I will not hinder you in that. The כי indicates the ground, on account of which the enemies might always put to shame the counsels of the poor. In Psalm liii. we have, corresponding to these words, הבישתה כי אלהים מאסם, *thou shamest*, viz. thine enemy, him who encamps against thee, (the naming of the object was unnecessary, because sufficiently plain from the preceding context,) *for the Lord has rejected them.* The righteous man, or the righteous generation, is addressed, to which also the חנך had been directed. As regards the meaning, these words are quite of one import with ours. Both passages unfold the firm hope of deliverance, on the ground that the Lord could not fail to give to righteousness the victory over wickedness.

Ver. 7. The Psalmist closes by expressing his desire after the salvation of God, promised in the preceding context, through the destruction of the church's enemies. *Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion, and the Lord returned to the imprisonment of his people! Then let Jacob rejoice, and Israel be glad.* The first clause is literally: *Who will give from Zion the deliverance of Israel?* The מי יתן, who will give, is confessedly used instead of the optative, as if it were: *might it but come. From Zion*, because there the Lord was enthroned in his sanctuary, as king of his people. It is quite erroneously supposed by De Wette, that the Psalmist must have been far from his native land, and looking towards it. The expectation of help from Zion, is found continually in those Psalms, which were unquestionably David's, or those, at least, which were certainly composed before the captivity; comp. for example, Psalm

iii. 4; xxviii. 2; xx. 2; cxxviii. 5; cxxxiv. 3. While the pious Psalmist utters this expectation, he thereby reminds God, that it is his obligation to help, since, as the head of the Divine kingdom, he could not abandon this to the devastations of the impious. If the Psalm had belonged to the period of the captivity, the Psalmist could not have looked for salvation from Zion. For the kingdom of God had no longer its centre there, after the prostration of the temple, as was indicated by Ezekiel, ch. xi. 22, when he caused the Shekinah, the symbol of God's indwelling presence, solemnly to depart from the temple. When Daniel also, after the destruction of the temple, turned his face in prayer toward Jerusalem; he did so only in reference to what had once been there, and what should be there again. He did not expect help out of Zion, but he directed his face thither, simply because, in his view, the city was holy, where the temple had stood, and where again a temple was to be reared. The only passage that De Wette makes available as a proof, that, even in exile, help was expected out of Zion, is Ps. cxxi. 1, and this becomes so only on the arbitrary supposition, that the Psalm belongs to the times of the captivity, the groundlessness of which is proved by the very commencement: I lift mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help. So here also the words themselves show that the Psalm could not have been composed, according to the modern hypothesis, in exile, and every interpretation of the following words, which proceeds upon that hypothesis, must appear quite unsuitable. The words: in the returning of the Lord to the imprisonment of his people, announce more immediately the way and manner in which the salvation of Israel should come out of Zion. It comes thus, that the Lord, who is throned in Zion, has compassion on the misery of his people, and returns to them in the manifestations of his grace. Modern commentators for the most part expound: when the Lord brings back the prisoners of his people. They then draw from this a proof that the Psalm could not be the production of David, but must have been composed during the captivity. Others, who still ascribe it to David, have been led by this to consider our verse as a later addition, which was done also by the author, *Beitr.* i. p. 142,—a supposition which is the less probable as this verse is found also in Ps. liii., and as thereby the sevenfold use of the name of God would be lost. But the whole exposition is demonstrably false; for,

1. שוב never has the signification of *bringing back*, it never is used intransitively, but always means to *return*, comp. *Beitr.* ii. p. 104. 2. It is alleged, without the least proof, that שבות signifies the *prisoners*, since, wherever it occurs, excepting in this form of expression, it rather denotes *the captivity*, the state of confinement. 3. The whole form of expression is unquestionably used in many other places, in a general way, for showing favour,—imprisonment, captivity, an image of misery, as very often the *prison*, Ps. cxlii. 7, *bands*, *cords*, comp. for example, Isa. xlii. 7; xlix. 9, &c. So Job xlii. 10, "And the Lord turned the captivity (prop., turned himself to the prison) of Job," though, certainly, Job was never confined. Then Jer. xxx. 18, "I turn myself to the captivity of Jacob's tents," for: to their mournful condition, as the tents cannot be considered there as imprisoned. Ez. xvi. 53, "I will return to their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters," &c.; q. d. I will exercise compassion on their misery, for certainly Sodom and the other cities of the plain of Jordan were not carried away into captivity, but were wholly annihilated, comp. the investigations in my *Beitr.* P. ii. p. 104, ss. On the other hand, there is not to be found one place in which the form of expression was unquestionably used in reference to the exiles. 4. The original ground of all the passages where this expression occurs is that of Deut. xxx. 3, "And the Lord thy God returns to thy prison-house, or captivity." But that there שוב is employed in its common signification of *returning*, and has the *object* of the return beside it in the accus. is clear as day. In ver. 1—6 alone the word occurs no fewer than six times; of these it is generally admitted to be five times used in the sense of *returning*, and how then should it now alone signify to *bring back?* Now, if we add to this the special grounds which, in our Psalm, declare against the reference to the bringing back from captivity,—the desire of help from Zion, and the whole matter of the rest of the Psalm, which does not contain the slightest allusion to the times of the captivity, but rather turns on relations of a general kind, common to all ages, and, finally, the superscription, we cannot entertain the least doubt of the alone correctness of the exposition, which renders: when the Lord returns to the captivity, *i.e.* the misery of his people, (the accus. being used, as is customary in verbs of motion, comp. Ex. iv. 19, 20, Numb. x. 36, Ps. lxxxv. 4, Nah. ii. 3.) But to wish that the Lord might

have compassion on the poor of his flock, there was so much the more occasion for David doing it, in a Psalm composed for the general use of the pious of all ages, the greater the deliverances were which he himself had experienced in the times of Saul and Absalom. The wish here expressed found its highest fulfilment in Christ, and this also is to reach its highest stage of development in the future, when the triumphant church shall take the place of the militant. Till then we shall have occasion enough to make the wish of the pious Psalmist our own. Amid the joy which arises from the lower fulfilments, the longing after the last and highest can never be extinguished. יגל and וישמח, on account of the form of the first, and a comparison with Ps. xiii. 6,—from similarity to which this Psalm, in all probability, owes its position—are to be taken as a wish and demand: then let Jacob exult, let Israel rejoice.

PSALM XV.

In this Psalm the question is answered, what must be the moral condition of the man who would be a true servant of the Lord, and a partaker of his grace. First, the question is put: Who is loved and esteemed by God? ver. 1. Then comes the answer, in two strophes of two verses, each of three members, ver. 2, 3, and 4, 5, in which the first verse of both strophes describes the nature of piety positively, the second negatively. The Psalm concludes with a declaration, pointing to the beginning, that he who acts such a part may comfort himself with the help of God.

The greater part of expositors suppose that David had composed this Psalm when the ark of the covenant was transferred to Zion, comp. 2 Sam. vi. 12, ss., 1 Chron. xvi. 1, ss., with the view of stirring up the people, by this occasion, to the true honouring of God, to genuine righteousness. Though this transaction afforded a suitable occasion, yet, in the Psalm itself, there is nothing which necessarily refers to that, and we should have regarded the supposition as a mere uncertain hypothesis, if the xxiv. Psalm, which coincides in a very striking manner with this, had not been undoubtedly occasioned by the circumstance in question.

Notwithstanding the simply positive aspect of the Psalm,

when formally considered, it still has an unquestionably polemical reference; it brings out the purely moral and internal properties of the man who is a member of God's kingdom, in contrast with the delusion of the hypocrite, who thinks himself secure of God's favour through the possession of externals, and the observance of ceremonies. This was perceived by Luther: "But this Psalm strikes against the lovers of outward show. For the Jews boasted themselves over all other people, on the two grounds, that they alone were the seed of the Fathers, and alone possessed the law of God." It is in perfect accordance with the occasion that the contrast with a mere outward service should have been brought prominently into view. David might have wished to meet, at the very threshold, the errors which were so apt to arise on the revived state of the worship, as connected with the removal of the ark to Zion. It is only when viewed in respect to such a polemical design that the subject of the Psalm can be rightly apprehended. The pressing simply of the commands of the second table admits of explanation, no otherwise than by supposing a contrast with hypocrites to be drawn.

The Psalm most probably owes its position after the xiv., to an internal reference which its subject bears to the other. Luther already remarks: "This Psalm follows the preceding one in the finest order. For, just as in that the form and pattern of the ungodly has been described, so now in this the pattern of the godly is described." This delineation of the righteous was with the more propriety made to follow Ps. xiv., as mention there occurs of a "righteous generation," which might console itself with the sure hope of God's help. It was important that every one should thereupon clearly understand what really constituted one a member of that righteous generation.

That David was the author of the Psalm appears, not only from the superscription and a comparison with Psalm xxiv., but also from ver. 1. The mention of the *tabernacle* of God in this verse does not permit us to come lower than the times of David. Hitzig, indeed, maintains that the name *tabernacle* was sometimes applied to the temple of Solomon; but this is in itself very improbable, and no satisfactory proof can be brought in support of it.

Ver. 1. *Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle, who dwell on*

thy holy hill? The sum, says Calvin, is this, that access to God lies open to none but his pure worshippers. The representation in the verse is a figurative one. The holy hill of God appears as a place of refuge, his sacred tabernacle as a hospitable tent, in which he receives his people to himself. Parallel passages, in which precisely the same figurative representation prevails, and no reference whatever is found to the outward worship of God, are Psalm v. 4, "The wicked shall not dwell with thee;" Psalm xxiii. 6, "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord all my days;" Psalm xxvii. 5 ," He shall hide me in his pavilion in the day of trouble;" Psalm xxiv. 3; lxi. 4, comp. Christol. P. II. p. 447. The image in all these places is taken from one who is received by another into his dwelling, or his possession. This kindness can be experienced from God only by those who are not excluded, on account of their unholiness, from his sacred presence, as is here indicated by the expression, "on thy *holy* hill," and even, indeed, by the emphatic suffix, "in *thy* tabernacle." The majority of modern expositors have misunderstood this figurative representation, occasioned probably by the external approach of great multitudes to the tabernacle of the Lord. Hence have arisen such expositions as those of De Wette, Maurer, and others, that the abiding and the dwelling imply here nothing but a frequent approach: as if it had been, who can, or who is worthy to abide? But such a method of exposition is as little accordant with the words of our text as with the parallel passages. These plainly show that the discourse here is of a continual social dwelling with God, which the righteous man enjoys, or that the dwelling with God is only an image of the confiding trust which is referred to at the close of the Psalm, where "the never being moved" is made to correspond to the "dwelling in the house of the Lord." Venema: "The answer given in the conclusion cannot be different from the thing sought." Dwelling with God marks, indeed, confidence and intimacy, but protection and stability are a necessary consequence of it. The futures are accordingly to be taken as proper futures, as it depends only upon the Lord, who is to be admitted into this confidential state. *Who shall dwell*—whom wilt thou permit, or to whom wilt thou grant the favour, that he should dwell with thee? That the ground was already laid for this figurative representation in the law, where the sacred tabernacle, by its very name, "the tabernacle of convocation,"

or meeting, is pointed out as the place where God was to hold fellowship with his people, and that hence, in Lev. xvi. 6, the Israelites are regarded as dwelling with God in his holy tabernacle, with all their sins, involving the necessity of an atonement, has been shown in my Beitr., vol. iii., p. 628. The representation runs even into the New Testament. In Matt. xxiii. 21, the temple appears as the spiritual dwelling-place of God, and in Eph. ii. 19, the members of God's kingdom are called οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, inmates of God's house.—גּוּר never signifies to dwell in general, but always specially to dwell as a guest and sojourner. The expression is to be primarily explained from the image of a rich and powerful man, who hospitably receives a poor stranger into his tent, an image which is more distinctly brought out in Psalm xxvii. 5. But the substance of the figure stands in this, that our dwelling with God is only after the manner of guests, that we are not born and rightful inmates of his house, but have become so merely through grace. That the figure is not carried too far,—that it must not be explained: whom dost thou receive to thyself, as one who receives a stranger into his tent, but only: who dwells in thy tabernacle as a stranger, that has been received by some potentate of earth, is clear from the expression, "on thy holy hill," which corresponds to "thy tabernacle." At the same time, the mention of the holy hill, by which nothing but Zion can be understood, shows that the tabernacle of God is not the old Mosaic tabernacle, which was then standing without the ark of the covenant on Gibeon, comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 39, 2 Chron. i. 3, 5, but the tent, which David had prepared for the ark on Zion, comp. 2 Sam. vi. 17, 1 Chron. xv. 1, xvi. 1, 2 Chron. i. 4. Nowhere, indeed, have the Psalms any thing to do with that old tabernacle at Gibeon, that shell without a kernel, but always where they speak of the sanctuary of the Lord, that upon Zion is the one referred to. The question regarding the qualifications for an interest in the kingdom of God, which the Psalmist here addresses to the Lord, he answers in the following verses before the Lord, according to his mind, and through his Spirit. It is just for the purpose of showing this, of showing that the settlement of the matter belongs to God and to him, who speaks in God's name, that he has addressed the question to the Lord. Those who suppose that the Psalmist puts the question in ver. 1, while in ver. 2—5 God

answers, have in point of form judged wrong, but correctly as to the substance.

Ver. 2. *He who walks blamelessly, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart.* We must explain: walking in, for *as* a blameless person. In Ps. lxxxiv. 11, הלך בתמים, walking in an unblameable, stands for *as* an unblameable. De Wette and Maurer would take תמים as a substantive, standing in the accus., but it is never so found, not even in Josh. xxiv. 14; and the supposition is opposed by the original passage, which the Psalmist seems to have had in his eye, Gen. xvii. 1, where God says to Abram, "Walk before me, and be thou unblameable." We may consider the words: who walks unblameably, as the general sentiment, which is applied in the second member to the deeds, and in the third, to the words and thoughts. On the expression, "And works righteousness," Luther remarks: "As if he would say, Not on this account, because thou art a priest, or a holy monk; not on this account, because thou prayest much, because thou dost miracles, because thou teachest admirably, because thou art dignified with the title of Father, nor, finally, because of any particular work, except righteousness, shalt thou dwell upon the holy hill of God." This is a sound exposition. The Psalmist had not, indeed, the particular kinds of false conceit before his eyes which are specified by Luther, but he certainly had the genus under which they are comprehended. In reference to the exclusive mention of works, which also frequently occurs in the New Testament, for example Matt. xxv., it is remarked by the same reformer: "And indeed it is worthy of notice that he draws the likeness of a pious people, without showing whence such was to come or be derived. Hence, it is true that a foolish person may apply all that is written in this Psalm to the moral virtues and free-will, though it is, in whole and in part, a work of the grace of God, which he works in us." That the Psalmist speaks merely of the works of the second table, arises from this, that he would distinguish the true members of the church from hypocrites, who have a thousand ways of counterfeiting the works of the first table. This Calvin notices: "Faith, calling upon God, spiritual sacrifices are by no means excluded by David; but because hypocrites seek to exalt themselves by many ceremonies, though their impiety is still rendered manifest by their outward walk, which is full of pride, cruelty, violence,

fraud, and such things, the proof of sincere and genuine faith is therefore sought in the second table of the law, that such deceivers might be exposed. For just as men practise justice and equity with their neighbours, do they in reality show themselves to be fearers of God." But of what sort the righteousness is, which the Psalmist requires,—that it consists, not like that of the Pharisees, in appearance, but in living reality, that it requires the most thorough agreement, not of the external actions merely, but of the heart, with the law of God, is very strikingly expressed in the last clause: "Who speaks truth in his heart." The words, "in the heart," show that the discourse here is of internal purity and truth, to which the truth that is outwardly expressed by the lips, is related as streams to the fountainhead. This reference to the heart goes through the whole Psalm, and excludes all, who give only an outward satisfaction to its requirements, from any interest in its promises. Where, in one feature of the delineation, express allusion is made to the heart, there, in the others, words and deeds can only so far come into consideration, as they proceed from a pure and spiritual mind; as it is only then also, where this is the case, that words and deeds can be sure and abiding. "Hypocrites," says Luther, "can do much, or even the whole of this in appearance for a time, but in a time of evil they do the reverse."

Ver. 3. As the Psalmist, in the preceding verse, had mentioned some gifts which the true members of the church must possess, so here, he points to certain faults from which they must be free. In regard to the construction, this verse, like the following ones, is quite complete of itself. *He slanders not with his tongue.* רָגַל occurs frequently in Piel, in Kal, only here. Derived from רֶגֶל, *foot*, it properly means, to *go hither and thither*, whence the signification of *spying out, babbling to and fro, slandering*, very naturally arises. The *tongue* stands opposed to the *heart*. Here, also, we are presented with the trilogy of thought, word, and deed, which runs through the Decalogue. The preposition עַל is to be explained by the circumstance, that the tongue forms, as it were, the substratum of calumnies. Quite analogous is the expression in Gen. xxvii. 40, "Upon thy sword shalt thou live," comp. also Isa. xxxviii. 16. There is an allusion to the passage in Lev. xix. 16, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer, רגל=רכל—רכיל—

among thy people." *He does not evil to his friend, and does not take up a reproach against his neighbour.* The words לרעהו and על קרבו are used with peculiar emphasis. They imply, how improper it would be to act injuriously toward those who are united to us by so many ties. As this idea is so evidently implied, it is not advisable to take the two words, with Kimchi and others, in the most general sense for any one, with whom we have to do: what the latter, indeed, cannot properly signify. They both point to everything through which the members of the church of God have been bound together, not merely the general relation of man to man, but also the common bodily and spiritual derivation, through which they have, in a double sense, become *brethren.* It is the latter which is peculiarly pointed to in all the laws of the Pentateuch, referring to the injury of neighbours. Israel constantly appears as a people of brethren, every violation of the neighbourly relation, as an unnatural crime, a condition of things, which again occurs among *Christians* in a higher form. Comp. also, Ex. xxxii. 27, where רע and קרוב are found united as here, and where the exposition: Every one with whom we have to do, cannot be thought of. נשא cannot be taken here in the sense of *uttering*, which most interpreters give it, as the subjoined על sufficiently shows, but must have the signification *tollere*, therefore properly: *Who does not take up, or raise a reproach against his neighbour.* Considered more narrowly, we find, that the word may well enough signify to *originate*, but never to *utter*. In Ex. xxiii. 1, to which reference is here made, the proper reading is, "Thou shalt not *raise* a false report," the raising standing in contrast to the perpetuating, a contrast which exists also here. That משא, which is commonly derived from נשא, in the sense of speaking forth, uttering, signifies, not a speech, but a burden, has been proved in my Christology, P. ii. p. 102. With על, the verb often occurs in the sense of lifting on any one, for example, 2 Kings ix. 25, "The Lord lifted or laid on him this burden," Gen. xxxi. 17. Reproach is considered as a burden, which the person who spreads the slander, instead of allowing to lie, heaves on his neighbour.

Ver. 4. *In his eyes the rejected is despised, but he honours them that fear the Lord.* נמאס is either, the to be rejected, the vile, or he whom God has rejected. The latter exposition is to be preferred, because of the contrast it presents with the "honour-

ing of the Lord" in the following member, and because of the parallel passage in Jer. vi. 30, where it is said of wicked princes, "They are reprobate silver, *for the Lord has rejected them.*" The sense is therefore given by Luther: "The righteous One is no regarder of persons, he considers not how holy, learned, powerful, any one may be. If he sees *virtue* in him, he then honours him, even though he should be a beggar; but if he does not see that in him, he accounts him as an evil person of no value, tells him so, punishes him. Thou despisest, says he, God's word, thou revilest thy neighbour, therefore will I not be entangled with thee." Hitzig has revived another exposition, already adopted by some old commentators (Chal. Abenezra): "Who despises, who is little in his own eyes." The deepest humility and abasement would then be given as a mark of a true honourer of the Lord, as was beautifully described by David in 2 Sam. vi. 22. But this exposition has already been set aside by the remark of Calvin, that besides the harshness of the asyndeton, the manifest contrast, in which the two members stand, decides against it. Just as: He despises, stands opposed to: He honours, so must נמאס form the opposite to the fearers of God. The discourse here, therefore, can only be of the right position of a man toward the different classes of his fellow-men, or rather of his fellow-members, which the fearer of God attains, because of his eye being pure, because of his heart being drawn only to that with which he stands related, only to what has its origin in God, while it shuns, as a denying of the Lord, the external recognition of those, from whom one internally differs, and an external separation from those with whom one is internally united. The exposition of Jarchi were less objectionable: The despicable is in his eyes rejected; although this also lies open to the objection, that the *despising* forms a more suitable contrast to the *honouring*, than the *rejecting*, and that the *despised* can scarcely, without some addition, stand for *despicable*. In reference to this: He honours them that fear the Lord—who are to be regarded also as honoured by God, from the contrast with: The rejected or despised by God—Calvin remarks: "It is no common virtue to honour pious and godly men. For since they are often as the offscouring of the world, it not unfrequently happens, that their friends also draw its hatred upon them. Hence, most men reject their friendship, and suffer them to remain in dishonour, which cannot be done without great and dreadful offence to God."

He swears to his own hurt, and exchanges not. Following the LXX. who pointed לְהָרֵעַ, Luther has: who swears to his neighbour. De Wette, Gesenius, and others, expound: "he swears to the wicked, and changes not," *i.e.*, even the promises which he made to the ungodly, he fulfils with inviolable integrity. According to this exposition, לְהָרַע is the same as לְרַע with ה dropt. The article is indeed commonly dropt after ב, כ, ל, but in particular cases it has been retained, comp. the ex. n Ewald, p. 175. These cases nearly all belong to a later age, and are taken from Nehemiah, Chronicles, Ezekiel, when the language, gradually falling into disuse, was again written according to the etymology, although one instance does occur in the Psalms of David, בהשמים. Apart from the consideration, however, that we should only be justified in admitting here so rare a form, if no other suitable exposition presented itself, the sense yielded by this exposition is by no means a suitable one. For who could properly seek to get rid of an oath, on the pretext, that he to whom it was made, was not a virtuous man? Then, it also decides against this exposition, that it destroys the connection which so manifestly exists between this passage and Lev. v. 4,—which is the less uncertain, as the Psalm has, throughout, so close a bearing on the law, so that we must cast about for another interpretation. The form לְהָרַע, in all the places where it occurs, and these are many, is inf. in Hiph. with ל of the verb רוע, *to do ill, to bring hurt, to hurt.* So it is found, particularly in Lev. v. 4, where the discourse is of a hasty oath: לְהָרַע אוֹ לְהֵיטִיב, for hurt, or for benefit. Hence: he swears for hurt, and exchanges not, must mean: when he happens to have made a promise or oath, which tends to his hurt, he still most religiously fulfils it. "Hence," Calvin remarks, "arises such lawless perfidy among men, because they conceive themselves to be no farther bound by their pledged word, than may be for their profit. Therefore David, while he condemns that levity, demands of the children of God another sort of stedfastness in their promises." The objection, that the person must be more exactly determined, who is affected by the hurt, is inconsiderable. He who was to suffer damage by the oath, is so perfectly obvious, that no farther description was necessary. חמיר, may, properly enough, be taken in its common signification, of exchanging, or putting something else

in the place of; and there is no reason for substituting for this, the sense of not keeping or breaking. He exchanges not, is as if it was: he gives what he has vowed, and puts nothing else in its place. Luther remarks, quite in the spirit of the Psalmist: "I believe that what the prophet here says of keeping an oath is to be understood also of every sort of promise. For its object is to inculcate truth and fidelity among men. But it makes special mention of the oath, because, in a pre-eminent way, good faith is thereby either kept or broken."

Ver. 5. *He gives not his gold to usury.* The Mosaic law forbids the lending of money for interest to an Israelite, Ex. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 37; Deut. xxiii. 19; Prov. xxviii. 8; Ez. xviii. 8. In several of the passages referred to, it is expressly supposed that money is lent only to the poor—a supposition which has its ground in the simple relations of the Mosaic times, in which lending, for the purpose of speculation and gain, had no existence. Such lending ought only to be a work of brotherly love, and it is a great violation of that, if any one, instead of helping his neighbour, takes advantage of his need to bring him into still greater straits. The Mosaic regulation in question has accordingly its import also for New Testament times. With the interest-lending for capitalists, who borrow for speculation, it has nothing to do. This belongs to a quite different region, as is implied even by the name נשך, a mordendo, according to which only such usury can be meant as plagues and impoverishes a neighbour. By unseasonable comparison with our modes of speech, many would expound: his money he puts not to interest. That the נתן signifies here to *give*, not to *put*, is shown by לקח in the next member; the improper giving, and the improper taking, are placed parallel to each other. בנשך cannot signify: upon usury, but only: for usury; the ב is currently used in regard to the payment of a price, Ewald, p. 607. Opposed to the giving for usury is the giving gratis, whether in loan or as a present, comp. Prov. xxviii. 8. There is a reference in words and even in letters to Lev. xxv. 37, "Thou shalt not give thy money for usury." *And he takes not a present against the innocent;* when he has to give judgment on a cause, he does not permit himself to be seduced by bribes from the rich and powerful to an unrighteous decision. This also is marked in the law of Moses as a great crime, Ex. xxiii. 6; Deut. xvi. 19, "Thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth

blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous;" xxvii. 25, "Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person." From these two passages the words before us are literally taken. The last words: *he who does this shall never be moved*, are parallel to the first, "he shall abide," &c. For he whom the Lord takes into his house as a member is secure against all the storms of misfortune. Psalm lv. 23 may be compared as parallel. De Wette's words: "for, according to the notions of the Jews, the pious, as such, is prosperous," may be allowed to pass, if only the addition is permitted: as also to those of Christians.

PSALM XVI.

The substance of this Psalm is comprised in its very first words, "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust;" all, besides, presently appears as a development of this thought, so soon as it is observed that the *preserve me*, to which also the briefness of the prayer points, has for its foundation the confident hope of such preservation, and includes within it, Thou wilt preserve me.

The first words embody a twofold idea: they express the Psalmist's confidence in the Lord, or that the Lord is his confidence and salvation, and they ground upon this his preservation amid the dangers by which the Psalmist was surrounded. Both elements appear also among us in the same connection, for example, in the declaration, "Jesus is my confidence and my salvation in life; this I know; must I not therefore take comfort? And why also should I brood over the long night of death?

The farther development of the first idea, which respects the trusting in God, is contained in ver. 2—7. He recognises in Jehovah the only Lord of all things, without whom nothing can help, with whom nothing can injure, the sole author of his salvation, with the whole community of the Lord, to which he attaches himself with inward love, ver. 2, 3.

He turns away with abhorrence from the other gods, from which the world seeks salvation, purchasing by their sacrifices pain instead of the desired salvation; he finds his salvation in the Lord, who prepares for him a glorious portion, ver. 4, 5.

He accounts himself blessed in the possession of this inheri-

tance, or of the Lord with his goods and gifts, and is full of gratitude to the Lord, who has laid open to him the way to such an inheritance, ver. 6, 7.

The development of the second idea, of the: Preserve me, O God, the representation of the hope growing out of the confidence already expressed, is given in ver. 8—11.

His hopeful eye is in the time of trouble directed upon the Lord; for he, his Saviour, will not permit him to go down. Therefore is his heart full of joy at the emerging deliverance, and of this he reckons himself quite certain, ver. 8, 9.

For God, his Saviour, will not give up him, his pious one, to death—confiding in him, he shall exclaim, Death, where is thy sting, Grave, where is thy victory?—he will endow him with life, joy, and salvation, ver. 10, 11.

The strophe-division rises to view of itself from the representation of the contents just given. The first verse, which possesses an introductory character, contains the quintessence of the subject; it stands by itself. The rest has its regular course in strophes of two verses each. Apart from the introduction, the whole is completed in ten verses; and the ten is subdivided into five.

The superscription names David as the author, and even De Wette cannot help remarking that "there is no decided reason for the contrary." The originality of the superscription is confirmed by the circumstance that מכתם occurs only in superscriptions of the Psalms which are marked with the name of David, a fact not easily accounted for on the supposition of those who hold the superscriptions to be the productions of a later collector. The character also of this designation, which has quite an enigmatical aspect, is what David was peculiarly fond of in his superscriptions. Its correctness is further confirmed by the remarkable coincidences with other Psalms of David, which we meet with here, comp. ver. 1 with vii. 1, xi. 1; ver. 5 with xi. 6; ver. 8 with xv. 5, x. 6; ver. 11 with xvii. 15. We call attention also to such purely Davidic phrases as "my glory," in ver. 9 (comp. on vii. 6), "dwell confidently," in ver. 9, comp. with iv. 8; "with thy countenance," in ver. 11, comp. with xxi. 6; and "by thy right hand," in ver. 11, comp. xvii. 7.

The situation of the speaker is that of one who finds himself in great danger, and is in prospect of death. But this danger is nowhere particularly specified; it is only indicated by the

most general circumstances; and this alone renders it probable that David had composed the Psalm, not so much in his own person as in that of the pious man in general; that he presented here for the feelings of such an one a mirror, in which all pious men might recognise themselves—a pattern after which they might conform themselves, not as if for that purpose he transported himself into a situation and frame of mind quite foreign to himself, but only that he, drawing from the source of his natural experience, just extended his consciousness so as to embrace that of the pious at large. This supposition is raised into certainty, when we ascertain the correct reading in ver. 10 to be "thy holy ones." For this puts it beyond a doubt that the person who speaks in this Psalm is an ideal one, comprehending in the personality a manifold variety, and that every pious man should find himself represented in it, and by its help should rise, by means of his confidence in God, to the expectation of hope.

A secret of David. מכתם is very variously expounded. Many of the older translators (Chald., Aq., Symm.) considered it as a compound word, and this has recently found a supporter in Vorstmann, in his laborious commentary on this Psalm, Haag 1829. The word according to him is = מן תם, probably falsely pointed, and he expounds: The distressed, delivered. This explanation has something, at first sight, that recommends it; for such enigmatical designations of the subject in the superscriptions are quite in the manner of David, and such a superscription as that just given, suits admirably to the subject of the Psalms where it occurs, which comprehend, along with this, Ps. lvi.—lx. But to say nothing of the punctuation, and the fact, that תם is always used in a moral sense, it is decisive against this view, that מכתם never occurs along with מזמור, Psalm, or with משכיל, didactic Psalm, or even with תפלה, prayer, but always stands in a similar position to these words, either before the לדוד or after it (the same change is found in the use of מזמור, see for ex. Ps. xxiii., xxiv.) Precisely as we have here מכתם לדוד, we have in Ps. xvii. תפלה לדיד, from which it clearly appears that the word before us must stand upon one line with these others. Some again derive it from כתם, gold. So Eben Ezra, who says that the Psalm has been thus named because its excellence is like the best gold. Luther: A golden jewel. Similar designations also occur elsewhere. Among the

Arabians, the seven pre-Mohammedan poems, known under the name of Moallakat, are also called, on account of their excellence, Modhahabat, that is, *golden*. Further, among them the proverbs of Alli are for the same reason named, the *gold of morals*. Among the Greeks we find the *golden verses* of Pythagoras. But it is to be objected to this exposition, that scarcely can a noun be pointed out with מ, which borrowed its signification merely from a derivative noun, without respect to the literal idea, and especially from such an one as occurs only in poetry. Others, for example Gesenius, in his *Thes.*, take מכתם as=מכתב, writing, which is used in Isa. xxxviii. 9, in the superscription of Hezekiah's song of praise. But this view also is to be rejected, on the ground that the roots כתם and כתב are strongly separated from each other in the Semitish dialects, no trace being found of their intermixture, and still more decidedly, because *writing* is expressive of nothing, and the predilection of David for this designation, as also the circumstance that it is peculiar to him alone, cannot then be explained. Others, as Hitzig, take the word in the sense of *jewel*, from כתם, to which they give the meaning of *carefully preserving*. The verb, however, never has this signification, but only: to conceal, to cover, to secrete. In the same signification it occurs in Arabic; the Syriac signification of sealing up, and staining, and disfiguring (comp. in reference to the latter, the ἀφανίζειν in Matt. vi. 16,) are only derived ones from it. In Hebrew it occurs in Jer. ii. 22, "though thou wash thyself ever so much, yet is thine iniquity *marked* before me," and in כתם, gold, prop. the covered, comp. סגור in Job xxviii. 15. Hence would the word מכתם, properly first formed by David, mean a secret = a song with a deep import. Understood in this sense, the designation is in the highest degree suitable. Like the Psalm itself, how does it conduct us into the secret—the full depths of the divine life, how deeply mystical is its very language! Its whole subject is quite dark to those who are not experienced in the ways of the Lord. Besides, we should greatly err did we suppose that David, when he gave to many Psalms, in the superscription, the predicate of the secret, denied that character to the rest. It is rather common to them all, and is ascribed to some particular ones, only because they are parts of the whole, and such, unquestionably, as peculiarly possess the property in question. The same also holds good, for example, of the name משכיל, didactive

Psalm. We must everywhere understand it positively, not exclusively. All the Psalms are didactive, and in many this character is even more prominently displayed than in those which are expressly called such, so that there was no need for any N. B. in the superscription about it. From the above remarks, the *Michtam* in the superscription is like a procul pofani; it proclaims, at the very outset, to the readers, "O the heights and the depths which the Spirit of God alone can reveal!" The connection between this word and the מִכְתָּב, in Isa. xxxviii., does not need to be wholly given up. It is not improbable that the latter forms the groundwork of our designation, and that David only, by the change of a letter, transformed a word from a very common meaning, into a similar one of deeper signification.

Ver. 1. *Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust.* What an infinite richness of matter these simple words contain in themselves, appears from the following illustration. On the words, "preserve me, O God," Luther remarks: "He here begins like a man who sees his destruction before his eyes, who is abandoned by all, and must presently die. Such a man would speak in the following manner: Behold, I must die, my strength is departed from me, angels and men have forsaken me, nay, devils and men seek to devour me. I cannot escape, no one cares for my soul, every one already looks on me as lost, and counts me for dead. Therefore, Lord, thou alone art my preserver and my deliverer, thou, who savest him that has been taken for lost, and makest the dead to live, and liftest up the oppressed: Lord, deliver me, let me not be brought to shame. As he says somewhat differently in Ps. xxxi. 5: Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit.—So fares it with the godly: he dies daily, and still is always delivered and preserved. And this is the new life of faith and hope, which is celebrated for us in this Psalm, namely, the life under the cross, the life in the midst of death. . . . . Hence we should here learn that we must call upon the Lord, especially in distress, when we are ready to perish, in which circumstances the children of men, instead of doing nothing but call upon the Lord, rather renounce all hope, and give themselves up to despair." On the other words, "For I trust in thee," he also remarks: "See how trust here calls upon the Lord. How can he call upon the Lord who has not confided in him? Confidence and believing trust are reckoned among

those things which regard God as gracious according to his compassion, and through which he will make us perpetually blessed, as we see here. Nothing can stand, nothing can uphold or deliver, when matters come to such a pass, but a pure and firm faith, which grounds itself solely upon the Divine compassion, and which promises itself nothing from itself, but every thing from God. . . . . Whenever man places his hope on any thing else than on the Lord our God, he cannot say: I trust in thee. Hence should all persons in misery, and wrestling with despair, take heed that they labour and strive in the state of mind here described. This most excellent and noble affection, confidence in God, forms the distinction between the people of Christ, who are his property, and those who are not his people, and here there is no respect of persons, no rank nor title." But this confidence comes into consideration here, not simply as an affection, but also in reference to its object: whosoever *places* his confidence on the Lord, whose confidence and whose salvation he is. That both are here to be taken into account, that the Psalmist's ground of hope is not a subjective one merely, but also an objective one, is evident from what follows.

Ver. 2. (O my soul) *thou hast said to Jehovah, Thou art my Lord, my salvation is not without thee.* The אָמַרְתְּ, the second person fem. is only to be explained from supposing the address to be directed to the soul. That the soul is addressed, or is represented as speaking, is no unusual thing, comp. Ps. xlii., xliii., in which the Psalmist constantly addresses his soul anew, and stirs it up to confidence and hope in God, Jer. iv. 19, and especially Lam. iii. 24, 25: "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait upon him, to the soul that seeketh him,"—where allusion seems to be made to our Psalm. The difference between this latter passage and the one before us is only this, that here the soul is not expressly named; but such an omission is quite in keeping with the enigmatical character of our Psalm, and the general difficulty of its style, and analogies may be produced for it from the Arabian poets, perhaps also from 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 2 Sam. xiii. 39. The majority of modern expositors would read אָמַרְתִּי, I speak. But this is opposed by external authorities, and also by internal grounds. The expression: I speak, is extremely cold and flat; the address to the soul gives dramatic

life to the discourse; the Psalmist, after he has uttered the solemn words, "I put my trust in thee," holds converse with his soul, and raises it to a conviction that this is in reality its settled feeling, that it cannot despair in times of trouble, without coming into flagrant opposition with itself. The consequence of this is, that the soul, having again been within itself, "rejoices and is glad," in the sure expectation of God's salvation, ver. 9. Such interlocutions, in which the sacred bards still and pacify their souls, like a child weaned by his mother, Ps. cxxxi. 3, have something indescribably moving and touching. The first expression of trust in the true God is this, that we say to him, "thou art the Lord," the uncontrolled ruler over all in heaven and on earth, the possessor of all power, the dispenser of all safety, the One, without whom not a hair of our head can fall, who holds every breath of those who threaten us with destruction, the almighty Lord, whom heaven and earth obey, the supreme God, who has, and can do every thing. "Who is it that orders all things? Who distributes all gifts? It is God; and he also is the One who can supply counsel and aid when we are ready to sink." Trust in God manifests itself, further, in the lively acknowledgment that he is the alone author of preservation—that this is to be sought and found only in him, not from those whom the world calls gods. This acknowledgment, which is a simple outgoing of the conviction, that he is the Lord —for being this he must be the only author of preservation—is given utterance to in the words, "my good is not without thee," or beside thee; to which many analogous passages might be produced from our popular poetry, such as: "All that I am and have comes from the hand of God; all is the gift of the highest, nothing happens by chance; God alone is every thing to me, he must be continually my helper; all else that is to be found on earth soon vanishes," &c. That special reference is made here to the gods, when preservation is ascribed to God alone, appears from ver. 4. But this special reference is an accident; the gods come into notice only as those from whom, if men do not trust in Jehovah, they commonly seek help and safety; and in a perfectly similar relation to them stands one's own power, the aid of one's fellow-men, and whatever objects of trust may anywhere be found out of God. In unison with Ps. lxxiii. 25, "whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I

desire beside thee," the Psalmist renounces all such helpers and dispensers of good, and thereby proves that he has said in perfect sincerity, "I trust in thee."

We take the טובה, good, in the sense of preservation and prosperity, resting upon the opposite "sorrows," in ver. 4, and upon the corresponding words, "my part, my cup, my lot, my inheritance," in ver. 5 and 6. The עליך we expound: out of thee, beside thee, prop. in addition to thee, with allusion to Ex. xx. 3, "Thou shalt have no other gods beside me," על פני, prop. in addition to me, LXX. πλὴν ἐμοῦ, Targ. בר מני. This passage is the more important, as the Psalmist obviously had it in his eye, which we shall be the less inclined to doubt, if we take into view the beginning of ver. 4. Just as this, "Thou art the Lord," is the soul's response to the words in Ex. xx. 2, "I am the Lord thy God," so this, "Thou alone art my salvation," is the response to the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods beside me," the soul's declaration, that what should be, has actually come to be in its experience. The nearest approach to the exposition we have given is that of Sym., ἀγαθόν μου οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνευ σου, that of Jerome: Bonum meum non est sine te, as also that of the Chal. and Syr.: "Thou art my highest good." But we have to place against this, the reference to the Decalogue, and ver. 4, 5, 6, according to which, not only the *above*, but also the *beside* is excluded. That the על does not absolutely require such an exposition, show, beside the ground-passage in Ex., the examples in Gesenius's *Thes.* under על 1, b. γ. Still more decidedly objectionable is the exposition of Boettcher, Gesen., and others: All my prosperity is not to me above thee, the good which I have, I prefer not to thee. The unsoundness of this view appears from the opposite in ver. 4: many are the sorrows, &c., from the positive declaration in ver. 5 of what is here negatively expressed, from the reference to the Decalogue, and, finally, because this thought cannot be considered as an extension of the sentiment: I put my trust in thee, which alone were sufficient, as it does not at all suit the connection of the Psalm. The same grounds also for the most part decide against the exposition: My good is not over thee,=I can do thee no good, which, after the example of the LXX. (ὅτι τῶν ἀγαθῶν μου οὐ χρείαν ἔχεις,) Calvin propounds. "The sum," says he, "is this, that when we go near to God, we must lay aside all self-confidence. For if we imagine that there is something in ourselves, we need not be surprised

if he reject us, since we rob him of the chief part of his honour." This thought, however excellent in itself, does not suit as an extension of the words: I trust in thee, not with the context, nor even with the parallelism. But ver. 5 in particular is against it. The contrast with the pains or sorrows, which are experienced by the servants of false gods, shows that by the good of the Psalmist, must be understood, not the good which he does, but that only which he receives, which is imparted to him, prosperity or deliverance; comp. טובה in this signification, Psalm cxvi. 5, "Visit me with thy favour, that I may see the good of thy chosen," Job ix. 25. Utterly to be rejected also is the exposition of Kimchi and Jarchi: Thou art not obliged to do me good; as also that of Luther: I must suffer for thy sake, in connection with the following verse, which he renders thus: for the saints, who are upon the earth, and for those in glory. We have then, indeed, a sense which is applicable to Christ alone, but at the expense of the whole connection and train of thought. In his comm., however, he goes along with the LXX.

Ver. 3. *With the saints that are in the land, and the honourable ones, in whom is all my delight.* With this his confidence in Jehovah, the conviction that he alone is the Lord, the sole author of salvation, the Psalmist does not stand alone; he has it in common with the church of God, those whom God endows with the highest gifts, invests with a noble dignity, and to whom, on this account, the Psalmist cleaves with a fervent love. As a member of this church, which has its seat in the land of the Lord, he trusts in the Lord as his only Saviour, disdaining all those whom the world, the surrounding heathen nations, have forged to themselves. According to this exposition, the ל has just its common signification, and what is objected by Stier, regarding the ellipsis, *joining myself*, that it is too hard, there is no force in it; as an ellipsis can just as little be thought of here, as in the לדוד belonging to David, in the superscription. The ל is used in a quite similar manner, (de eo quorsum quis pertinet, Gesen. in *Thes.* s. v.) for example, 1 Kings xv. 27: Baasha the son of Ahijah, לבית ישכר, belonging to the house of Issachar. By the holy and honourable persons, are not designated certain individuals, or some particular classes in Israel, but, according to the idea, all Israelites were holy and honourable, the whole people of the covenant, and this predicate is continued to the whole, although a great part of the individuals

may have excluded themselves, by their own guilt, from a real participation in this dignity; these, the souls, that are cut off from their people, are considered as separate, though they may still be corporeally connected with them. For this reference to the church at large, decides, first, the expression, "who are in the land," then a comparison of the original passages on which the reference leans, Ex. xix. 6, "And ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests, (comp. the royal priesthood, as applied in 1 Peter ii. 9, to the whole church of the New Testament,) and a holy people," and Deut. vii. 6, "For thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself, out of all peoples that are on the earth." As a predicate of the whole people, the term "holy" is found also in Psalm xxxiv. 9, Dan. viii. 24, vii. 21. That the *saints* here does not mark the moral quality, but the dignity, appears not only from the passages already referred to, but also from the parallel אדירים, which never denotes the noble, in point of sentiment, but the noble in dignity, and is excellently rendered in the Berleb. Bible, by "princely." The saints are the chosen ones, those whom God has taken out of the territory of the profane world, and raised to the standing of his people. Of this elevation in dignity, an elevation in sentiment is certainly the consequence. The election of God, first of all, and above all, manifests itself in this, that he erects institutions, provides arrangements, and communicates powers, through which he makes to himself a people, that is zealous of good works.

בארץ, which must be translated, not: in the *earth*, but only: in the *land*, points to the dwelling-place of the holy, and the honourable. The church of God is a visible community, circumscribed in point of space, its place is the land of the Lord. The opposite of the holy, who possess the land, is made up of the outlandish worshippers of idols, of whom mention is made in ver. 4. Out of the land there are no holy and honourable ones, but such only as Jehovah has not chosen, and who do not trust in him, do not say to him, "Thou art the Lord, my salvation is not out of thee," but rather have commerce with others. It is just this connection between the people of the Lord, and his land, which is brought into view by David, in 1 Sam. xxvi. 19, where he says to Saul, "And if the children of men (have stirred thee up against me,) cursed

be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods." Then Josh. xxii. 24, 25, is also very clear, as, according to it, the tribes beyond Jordan, who did not dwell, strictly speaking, in Canaan, were afraid lest those within Jordan might say, "What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel; for the Lord hath made Jordan a boundary between us and you, ye have no part in the Lord." We see here how close the union was represented between an interest in the land of the Lord, and an interest in the Lord himself. So early as in Genesis are we met with this local circumscribing of the church of God. Cain, with his banishment from the rest of the human family, was driven away from the presence of God; Jacob is full of admiring gratitude to God, when Jehovah revealed himself to him after his withdrawment from the place to which the church of God was at that time confined. The deep truth which lies at the bottom of this mode of contemplation, is unfolded by Melancthon in his Locis, de Ecclesia, at the beginning: "By the church we are to understand the company of the called, which is the visible church, and are not to think of any as being elsewhere elected, out of this visible community. For God does not wish to be called upon or acknowledged otherwise, than as he has revealed himself, and he has nowhere revealed himself but in the visible church, in which alone is heard the sound of the Gospel," &c.

The last words properly mean: "The nobles, the wholeness of my desire is toward them;" comp. on the stat. constr. as thus used, Ewald, Large Gr. § 303, and the Small, § 509. The ground of the Psalmist's satisfaction in the holy and the noble, is just their holiness and their nobility; he attaches himself with all his heart to those, whom God has distinguished above all others, whom he has ennobled by his election. Of the erroneous expositions, we subject to proof only the most plausible and widely diffused. 1. Many, and among the last, Gesenius, expound: As regards the holy, who are in the land, and the honourable, so in them is all my delight. But against this, it is to be urged, that the stat. constr. never and nowhere occurs for the stat. absol.; as here אדירים would be in the room of אדירי. Besides, the sense thus obtained, does not at all suit the connection of the Psalm. As the whole to ver. 7 is only an enlargement of the idea: In the Lord I put my trust, as it all

only utters the confidence that is felt in the Lord, so the satisfaction of the Psalmist in the saints might well be expressed by the way, in a sort of side statement, but could not form a substantive and independent declaration. We must give up either this exposition, or the connection. Finally, the words: Who purchase of another, in ver. 4, immediately connect themselves with: My good is not out of thee, in ver. 2, and from this connection alone does *another* receive its determination; but this connection is destroyed the moment we convert the third verse into a substantive form; that can only stand with our exposition, according to which the Psalmist, in this verse, merely gives utterance to the thought, that he did not appear alone with his recognition of Jehovah, as the Lord and the sole author of salvation, but expressed it as a member of the church of God. 2. De Wette and others expound: "The saints who, in the land, are the honourable, toward whom is all my desire." This exposition avoids only the first of the objections just mentioned. The two others remain against it in full force. According to it also the thought breaks in upon the connection. De Wette, indeed, thinks that the sense suits admirably with the sentiment in the following verse: "The sense of the verse, according to our exposition, is: the poet holds with the pious in the land, the contrast to which is given in the next verse, namely, that he turns with abhorrence from the worshippers of idols." But the main idea placed in the front of the following verse, that those who purchased of another, and have many sorrows, is thereby left quite out of view, and of a horror of the worshippers of idols, there is no mention in this verse, when rightly expounded. 3. Hoffman, in his Prophecy and its Fulfilment, takes the ל here as corelative to that before Jehovah in ver. 2; there what the soul speaks to the Lord, here what it speaks to the saints. But the address is, throughout the whole Psalm, only to Jehovah; ver. 4 contains nothing, in point of matter, which is properly suitable as an address to the saints, and in point of form, also, there is not the least trace of such an address. It is also against this view, that by it the whole strophe-construction would be destroyed. Besides, even before Hoffman, it was put forth, and met with a similar refutation. Boettcher remarks against it: "The reference to ver. 2 implies, a too lengthened train of thought, in ירבו, in ver. 4, a too indistinct commencement for an address, as that at such a distance

from אמרת, it should be perceived by common readers, who are not skilful in exegesis."

Ver. 4. The Lord is, with the holy in the land, the Psalmist's only salvation; then they, who seek their salvation from others, receive for the sacrifices through which they endeavour to propitiate their favour, instead of the hoped-for possession of good, only an inheritance of sorrows; therefore he turns himself away with horror from these others, the idol-gods, he will have no part in their abominable service, and their names he will not take into his lips. *Many are the sorrows of those who purchase of another, I will not pour out their drink-offerings of blood, and not take their names into my lips.* Instead of "many are the sorrows," Ewald, Maurer, and several others, expound: many are the idol-gods. But this exposition is against the usage; it must then have been עֲצַבֵּיהֶם; עצבות are always *sorrows.* But this undoubted meaning must also be retained here on account of the contrast with טובה, in ver. 2: I seek my salvation from the Lord, for with the others are only sorrows. Then the mention of the manifoldness of the false gods appears also out of place here; and the exposition further deprives the verse of what might render it an extension of the Psalmist's declaration of confidence in the Lord, while it also disturbs its relation to the following verse, in which the many sorrows, which alone one can obtain from the false gods, are put in opposition to the rich goods which the Lord imparts. So much only in that exposition is right, that the Psalmist probably does make an allusion to the עצבים, gods, points to the mournful omen which was embodied even in the name,—an allusion which has the more significance in it, as the two words actually stand in close connection with each other, the idol-gods having received the name in question from the troubles and calamities which followed a transition to them. From such a commencement no good result could come. The *sorrows* consist, not merely in the extinguished hope, but also in the judgments which God suspends over the apostate, comp. Isa. lxv. 14, "Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit." The אחר מהרו many expound with De Wette: who hasten away elsewhere—an exposition which was long ago set aside by the older commentators with the remark, that אחר never signifies "away elsewhere," and that we are not justified in giving to מהר here the signification of *hastening*, as

this signification elsewhere belongs to it only in the Piel, while the Kal is found in Ex. xxii. 15, as also in Arabic and Syriac, in a quite different signification, viz. of buying a wife. Luther, who renders: Who hasten after another, has avoided the first objection. But the plain and uniform meaning of the words admits only of our exposition: who purchase of another. Against those who allege that "another" could not be used thus of other gods without some addition, it is not simply to be replied with Boettcher, that "the Hebrew poets are continually turning their thoughts toward God, and that which concerns him," but this expression, "another," does not stand here by itself for other gods; it receives its determination from ver. 2, where the Psalmist has described Jehovah as the only Lord, as the One, beside whom there is no salvation, and no saviour. Viewed in this connection, "the other" can only be another God beside Jehovah, and if it is maintained that אחר could only then signify a false deity, when, as in Isa. xlii. 8, xlviii. 11, it stands in immediate contrast with Jehovah, nothing, in fact, is demanded which is not found here. A more explicit description was the less necessary, as, in the Pentateuch, the expression of "going away after other gods" is of current use. Here, as there, the אחר is employed, not without emphasis, instead of the express mention of idols, for it imports as much as this, whosoever, if it be only another, not Jehovah, the Lord, the only saviour. The word thus clearly shows how unimportant the distinction is between the proper service of idolatry, as it is primarily understood here, and the service of idolatry in a more general sense. When this alone is taken into account, that another than the Lord is the object of trust, then stands mammon (whom the Lord, for that very reason, has personified, that he might place it on a level with the false gods, as these were commonly understood) in a precisely similar relation to Dagon.

In מהרו not a few would preserve only the general idea of buying, purchasing. They perceive here merely a sort of antithesis to the sacrifices with which the worshippers of idols sought to propitiate their favour, lavishing much expense upon their worship, and reaping in return nothing but sorrows. But there is no reason for omitting here the special meaning which usage has attached to the word, emit dote uxorem. This furnishes here a richer and deeper sense, and the application of it in such a connection is the more natural, as it is by images bor-

rowed from the married state, that the relation is constantly marked toward God and idols, which latter received the name of מאהבים, paramours. Applying this idea, it serves admirably, by means of the verb itself here used, to point out the impurity of the relation between idolaters and the objects of their worship. According to the oriental fashion, a man purchases his wife. The same also, substantially, needed to be done by the divinity in respect to its admirers, as holding the relation of a man to his wife. It belonged to the deity to take the initiative, to go forth and win the regard of its chosen. And this is precisely what was done by Jehovah in his relation to Israel; he purchased Israel to himself from the bondage of Egypt, comp. Hos. iii. 2. He met Israel with great demonstrations of love, first loved him, and sought his love in return. But it was quite otherwise with the false gods. These had done nothing to show their existence, or testify their love; the relation commenced with expensive sacrifices to them, on the part of their servants. Such a beginning could lead to no other end than the one here mentioned. A bought god never can afford salvation; the seed of the sacrifices can yield nothing but sorrows. A god who does not enter into the connection with tokens of his love will never fulfil it, and it is a piece of folly to cherish such a hope. The representation is analogous in Hos. viii. 9, "Ephraim hath bought for himself loves," and in Ez. xvi. 33, 34, where the prophet brings out the contrast that, while in all other cases presents were given to the person loved, the worshippers of idols gave presents to their lovers, the idol-gods. The suffixes in נסכיהם, *their* drink-offerings, and שמותם, *their* names, are referred by many expositors to those who purchase another, the idolaters, and by some again to the idols. The admissibility of the latter exposition cannot be denied, as the אחר is only an ideal oneness, put in opposition to the one true God, and, in point of fact, comprehends a multiplicity. It is also supported by the undeniable reference which the words, "I will not take their names into my lips," carries to the original passage, Ex. xxviii. 13, "Make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth," to which also that in Hos. ii. 17 refers, "And I will take away the names Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall be no more remembered by their name." The words themselves, also, can scarcely be viewed in reference to the worshippers of false gods; the pronouncing of *their*

names, those of the heathen nations, the Psalmist could have had no desire to shun. Finally, the reference to the idol-gods is demanded by the contrast in ver. 5. *The drink-offerings of blood* are understood by various expositors literally; but in this reference to a particular heathenish custom, for which it is necessary to collect, with much pains, very scattered proofs, the connection is not attended to, which would lead us to expect a rejection of the worship of false gods in themselves merely, those saviours who yet are none, and to whom is only given what is taken from the true God; not the *how* but the *that* of the idol-service is an object of abhorrence to the Psalmist. One must rather, with a comparison of Isa. lxiii. 3, explain thus the drink-offerings of blood: drink-offerings which are as much objects of abhorrence as if they consisted, not of the wine, which externally they were, but literally of blood. The expression: of blood, was the more natural, as wine is named the blood of grapes in Gen. xlix. 11, Deut. xxxii. 14, &c. Drink-offerings outwardly of the blood of grapes, inwardly of the blood of men.

Ver. 5. Not those others, with whom are only sorrows, are the Psalmist's salvation, the Lord alone is that, and in him he finds fulness of blessing. *The Lord is my portion and my cup, thou makest my lot glorious.* The meaning was given quite correctly by Muis: "All my good is of God, and in God alone." That the Psalmist here names God his portion, not in respect to the pure love of the mystics, does not bless himself, as Boettcher would have it, on account of his internal connection with God, but is rather to be regarded as simply declaring that God is the alone author of his salvation, is clear from the circumstance that this verse is still an extension of the sentiment, "I put my trust in thee," as also from the expression, "Thou makest glorious my lot," but especially from the affirmation in ver. 2, "My good is not out of thee," which here returns in another form, according to which the Psalmist expressly renounces connection with those in whom one seeks good out of God, and from the contrast of the many sorrows which the service of those others draws in its train. The Lord comes here, therefore, into consideration according to the entire fulness of the goods and gifts which dwell in him, and the declaration, "The Lord is my portion and my cup," is substantially the same as if he had said: What the Lord has, and gives, that alone do I seek, that is for me, and with it I am content. This meaning

receives confirmation as the only correct one, from a comparison of the original passages in the Pentateuch, which the Psalmist manifestly has in view here. They are those, in which the Lord is named Levi's portion and inheritance, Numb. xviii. 20, "The Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them; I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel,"—where J. H. Michaelis thus gives very correctly the sense: "From me alone thou shalt receive what is amply sufficient, and what things are due to me, these shall be thine;" Deut. x. 9, xviii. 1, 2, where this, "The Lord is their inheritance," is explained by "The offerings of the Lord and his inheritance are they to eat." Just as there, it is not as if a demand were made at Levi, that he, coming to enjoy the favour of God, and considering this as compensation fors sacrifice his, should give up all besides, but rather, that a participation in the rich goods of the Lord was assigned him as compensation, so the declaration here, "the Lord is my portion," is as if it were: In the possession of the Lord and his goods and gifts, I freely give up to the world its *seeming* gifts and goods, which, more narrowly examined, are but *sorrows*. Calvin justly remarks, that the opposite state of feeling, unbelieving and ungrateful dissatisfaction with the highest and only good, or the only true source of all happiness, is the basis of superstition and of all false worship. On the form מנת comp. on Ps. xi. 6. What is the import of, "The Lord is my cup," is evident from Ps. xxiii. 5, "my cup runneth over," comp. also Ps. xi. 6. The Lord is for his people a cup which is never empty, and never suffers them to become thirsty, the source of all good; by means of it they are richly provided with everything which can contribute to their refreshment during life, so that it were thankless folly for them to seek for refreshment elsewhere. The last words are commonly expounded: Thou supportest, or maintainest my lot. After the example of the older translators תומיך is taken as a participle. But such a participle-form is wholly without example. The יוֹסֵף in Isa. xxix. 14, and xxxviii. 5, which is referred to, is manifestly not a participle, but the third person future. It is to be added, that the supporting or maintaining of the lot has something of a strange aspect; the lot is not maintained for the Psalmist by God, but bestowed on him. As the word stands here, it can scarcely be anything else than the fut. in Hiph. of ימך. Now this verb has in Arabic the

highly suitable signification, amplus fuit, therefore in Hiph. to make broad, glorious. So first Schultens Inst. ad fundam. l. Hebr. p. 298.

Ver. 6. *My possession has fallen to me in bliss, also a goodly heritage was to me.* The sense is excellently given by Calvin: "He confirms what he had already said in the preceding verse, namely, that he rested with a composed and tranquil mind in the one God (and his salvation); nay, he so glories in this that he looks down with contempt on whatever the world might feign itself to have of a desirable nature without God." חבלים, lines, measuring cord, then the measured portion, the possession. So Josh. xvii. 5. The possession of the Psalmist is the Lord with his goods and gifts. The *falling* must, according to most interpreters, be understood as a figure from the lot. But no ground exists for this supposition. נפל with ל, occurs, in the signification of happening to any one, without respect to the lot, in Numbers xxxiv. 2, Judges xviii. 1. בנעימים is commonly rendered: in pleasant places. But against this Boettcher justly alleges that no example is to be found of an adjective, not of local import, which, without any addition, refers to places; and in Job xxxvi. 11, נעימות stands parallel with שמחות, in a sense precisely similar to the word here: in bliss. These reasons are decisive. The plural is used here, as frequently, for marking the abstract: delightful things, for delightfulness, bliss. But when Boettcher farther maintains that, in delightfulness, stands for: upon the most delightful, we cannot agree with him. When a noun with ב follows the words: possession fell to me, every one expects to find in that a designation of the locality of the possession. We consider the bliss and delight as the spiritual region, upon which the Psalmist has obtained his possession. The אף stands here, as also in ver. 9, not as a particle of ascension, but with a weaker import, in the sense of *also*, comp. Winer s. v. נחלת is not stat. constr., but the poetical form of the stat. absol. The expression: an inheritance, it is fine, is a loose construction for: an inheritance, which is fine, a fine or goodly heritage. עלי is prop. *upon me*, for: it is with me, I have, possess it, and is to be explained thus, that the possessor of a matter is considered as the bearer of it. Precisely so is the על used in Ps. vii. 8, cxxxi. 2, Neh. v. 7. Quite correctly already Luther: a fine inheritance has become mine. Gesenius, De Wette, and others, render: and the possession *pleases* me.

But then אַף, which can only mean *also*, not *and*, must be connected, not with the noun, but with the verb; we should have expected the art. or the suff. at נחלת; and though שפר with על occurs in Chal. in the sense of *pleasing*, yet never in Hebrew.

Ver. 7. *I will bless the Lord, who has counselled me, also by night my reins stimulate me.* The words: who has counselled me, receive light by being viewed in connection with what precedes. The Psalmist, placed in the midst of all possessions, knows not what to choose, or where to settle himself. Then the Lord conveys to him the counsel, to choose the pleasant inheritance delineated in the preceding verses, *i.e.* to put his trust in him, to seek his salvation only in him, to apply himself to him as the only saviour, and this counsel he celebrates here with grateful praise. Calvin: "Finally, David confesses this also to have been given him of the more grace of God, that he had come by faith into the possession of so great a good. For it would avail nothing that God freely offered himself to us, unless we received him in faith, for that is done to all alike. We must therefore know that both is the gift of God's free grace—his being our inheritance, and our possessing him in faith." The object of the counsel is indefinitely given by Jarchi: "to choose the life, and to walk in his ways;" by De Wette: "that I have remained true to him;" and by Boettcher: "not to renounce it," to say nothing of the arbitrary view of Hitzig. Others render: because he has cared for me; but this explanation is not supported by usage. יעץ with the accus. signifies: to give any one counsel, comp. Ex. xviii. 19, Jer. xxxviii. 15, 1 Kings i. 12. In the second member that, to which the Psalmist is admonished, is manifestly the praise and thanksgivings mentioned in the first. The impulse to thank the Lord for his gracious counsel, springing from the most profound and lively apprehension of the greatness of the salvation, into which the Psalmist had been mercifully introduced, is so powerfully felt by him, that it continues with him through the night-season, and leads him to praise and give thanks, when the whole world is asleep.

Here begins the second part of the Psalm, in which hope springs out of confidence.

Ver. 8. *I set the Lord always before me, because he is on my right hand, I shall not be moved.* According to the connection, the eye of the Psalmist, hoping even in the midst of distress, is

continually directed upon the Lord, or he looks out for the Lord as his helper in trouble and death. Luther: "It gives such a fresh courage and undaunted heart, when one has God always before one's eyes, that even adversity, the cross, and sufferings, will then be cheerfully encountered and borne. Farther, such a faith can be overmastered and vanquished by no cross and calamity." In the words: *Because he is*, &c., the Psalmist gives the ground of his hope being placed upon the Lord. The hope proceeds from confidence. The expression, "He is on my right hand," as my Saviour and helper, corresponds to the: I put my trust in thee, in ver. 1, and brings into a short compass, the substance of ver. 2—7, where the Psalmist represents that the Lord is his saviour.

Ver. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also shall rest secure. Therefore*, namely, because the Lord is on my right hand, and I shall not on that account be moved. In the preceding verse: I hope in the Lord, for he is my saviour; here: He is my saviour, therefore I hope in him, I am full of joy and gladness, and sure of my deliverance. The *glory* or *honour* is here also an emphatic designation for the soul. What the heart and soul rejoice upon, that it is on the certainty of salvation, assurance in trouble and before death, is clear from the parallel: My flesh also shall dwell secure, in ver. 10. By the flesh, many of the Messianic interpreters understand the lifeless body, the corpse; to this, the Psalmist promises a safe repose in the tomb; so Luther: My flesh also will *lie* secure. But the following reasons are against this: 1. בשר, flesh, when used elsewhere in connection with the soul and heart, denotes, not the *corpse*, but the *living body*, as the soul in such cases is not separated from the body, but is in the body. Comp. Ps. lxiii. 1, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee;" lxxxiv. 2, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh." 2. The expression: בלטח ישכן, cannot of itself be properly understood of the rest of the body in the grave; the *dwelling* does not suit well with that, as appears from the fact, that these expositors for the most part quietly substitute *lying* in its place. And if we compare the primary and parallel passages, this exposition will appear only the more inadmissible. In them, the expression denotes a condition of settled prosperity, endangered and disturbed by no hostile assault. So Deut. xxxiii. 12, of Benjamin, "The belov-

ed of the Lord shall dwell *in safety* by him;" ver. 28, "And Israel dwells in safety,"—which passages, in particular the latter, are the rather to be considered as primary or ground-passages, as the expression of *dwelling safely*, when used of an individual, has a certain air of strangeness, and as the reference to it in Ps. iv. 8, "For thou Lord only makest me to dwell in safety," is undeniable. Comp. besides, Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16; Judges xviii. 7. 3. The succeeding context decides against the exposition in question. For, first, as we find there the soul put in the stead of the flesh, we are naturally led to reject the idea that here, the flesh denotes the soulless body. Then, we do not find there, as that interpretation would lead us to expect, preservation *in* death hoped for, but preservation *before* death.—We must, therefore, even adopting the strong and direct Messianic meaning, understand the words, not of the secure repose in the grave, but only of salvation and deliverance generally. That Peter already understood the words so, appears from this, that he finds Christ's preservation, not in death, but before it, declared in the following verse.

Ver. 10. *For thou*, my only God, my portion, and my cup. Thou, who makest my lot glorious—that we must fill up thus, appears from the designation, "thy holy ones," in the second member—*Thou wilt not leave my soul to hell, nor give up thy holy ones to see the grave.* The confidence of salvation expressed in the preceding verse, is here grounded upon this, that the Lord, as the Psalmist's saviour, could not surrender him a prey to death, to which the corresponding positive idea is presented in the next verse, that he should impart to him life, joy, and bliss. עזב with ל, means, to leave to any one, to give up, comp. Lev. xix. 10; Ps. xlix. 10; Job xxxix. 14. The exposition of Luther and of many others: Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, has both usage and the parallelism against it, according to which, the pious is not even to see the grave, and, consequently, his soul could not be in hell (sheol). Peter, for the sake of whom this exposition has been adopted, has not followed it. He renders, in Acts ii. 27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul to hell," εἰς ἅδου, or, according to Lachmann, ἅδην, as also the LXX. have: wilt not die and be buried; this hope Peter finds expressed in the Psalm, and realised in Christ, notwithstanding his death and burial. For a death such as his, and in consequence of his, that also of his people, is as a mere passage into life, and not

deserving the name of death. We may here also take into account the word of Christ, Matth. ix. 24: "The maid is not dead but sleepeth." Comp. also John xi. 11.—The distinction between the two readings חסידיך, thy holy ones, and חסידך, thy holy one, is important. Were the latter a mere Kri, it were unquestionably to be thrown away, as a conjecture of some modern critic. But the matter is not so. A great many copies, and among these, some very good ones, have "thy holy one" in the text. All the old translations express the singular, and so also do Paul and Peter. It is also to be considered, that the Jewish polemical interest, their opposition to the Messianic interpretation, favoured the reading in the plural חסידיך. The passages in Jewish writers, in which this is employed with that view, may be found collected by Aurivillius, de vera lectione vocis, חסידיך. We are still inclined, however, to regard it as the original reading. It is supported, 1. By the preponderance of the external critical authorities; the testimony of the manuscripts, which is chiefly upon its side, cannot be outweighed by the testimony of the old translations, which carry no great weight with them in such matters. 2. The plural, as the more difficult reading, might readily be exchanged for the more easy singular, by those who knew not what to do with it, since, throughout all the rest of the Psalm, an individual appears as the speaker. That the Jewish polemical interest favoured the plural, is not enough to counterbalance this reason; for views of that sort could not exercise more than a partial influence.—Recognising the plural as the correct reading, we perceive here, as was remarked in the introduction, the not individual character of the Psalm, its destination for all pious persons, precisely as in Ps. xvii. 11.—The expression, "thy holy ones," contains the ground of confidence. It combines all that the Psalmist—or those in whose name, and out of whose soul he speaks—has uttered, in ver. 2—8, upon his relation to the Lord; the pious, or holy man is he, who trusts in the Lord, takes him for his only good, &c. —שחת is rendered διαφθοράν by the LXX.; and that there is a noun שחת in the sense of corruption, derived from שחת, to corrupt, destroy, beside the common שחת, which, derived from שוח, signifies, *pit, grave*, is still recognised even by Gesenius and Winer. But the passage, which is chiefly rested on for this, Job xvii. 14, is by no means decisive, since the common signification pit, grave, can very properly be admitted there as parallel

with *worm*, and the most urgent reasons would require to be produced for the contrary, as it is in itself improbable, that one and the same word can have different derivations and meanings. *Here* the sense of *corruption* is the less admissible, as the same expression ראה שחת is elsewhere, Ps. xlix. 9, demonstrably used in the sense of: seeing the grave. The defenders of the other exposition have improperly pressed the authority of Peter in support of it. It appears that Peter, Acts ii., who still undoubtedly addressed the "men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem" in the Aramaic dialect, took the שחת, no doubt retained by him, in the sense of *grave*, and not of *corruption;* for to see the שחת, corresponds with him in reference to David, with: "He is dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day;" as also he died, corresponds to: "Thou wilt not leave my soul to hell." Hence, it appears, that no stress is to be laid upon the διαφθορά, which Luke may just have adopted from the received translation. The argument of Peter remains in full force, though we should substitute *grave* for *corruption*, if only it is understood that by the seeing, something abiding is meant, such a seeing is always meant when the opposite phrase of "seeing life" is employed. Christ's death and burial are not considered as death and burial. Paul, also, in his line of argument, Acts xiii. 36, 37, lays no stress upon the idea of corruption, as distinguished from the grave: David, after he had in his own generation served the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." The argument is not at all overthrown, if we substitute grave for corruption. Christ did not see the grave in the same sense that David did; he did not see it in the sense of the Psalmist.

Ver. 11. *Thou wilt make known to me the way of life; fulness of joy is for me before thy face; a blessed life through thy right hand for evermore.* The Psalmist hopes to receive from the Lord, his Saviour, and his confidence, negative preservation from death, (the preceding verse,) positive life, joy, and bliss. The way of life, as Luther properly translates, is: the way to life. In Prov. ii. 19, the paths of life, are the paths which lead to life. Life stands immediately opposed to the death, from which the Psalmist hopes, in ver. 10, to be preserved, and improperly would several here give to *life* exactly the signification of *salvation*. But that, on the other hand, we are not to think

of simple life merely, naked immortality, is shown by its connection with joy and bliss. A miserable life is to be named no life, in the Bible sense, it is only a form of death. The words: Thou wilt make known to me the way of life, involve, therefore, a double idea: Thou wilt preserve me in life, and endow me with blessing. The את פניך, prop. with thy countenance, occurs again in Psalm xxi. 6: "Thou enlivenest him through joy with thy countenance." The joy springs out of the fellowship with the Lord's countenance, which was granted to the Psalmist; light breaks in upon the darkness of his misery. Comp. Psalm iv. 6, "Lift upon us the light of thy countenance," Psalm lxxx. 3. בימינך can only mean: through thy right hand; and the exposition of Luther and others: at thy right hand, is wrong. As joy proceeds from God's countenance, so from his right hand, which is almighty either to punish or to deliver, bliss, comp. Psalm xvii. 7.

It still remains for us, now that we have finished our exposition of the Psalm, to investigate its Messianic import. That such an import does belong to it, is certain, even apart from the testimonies of the New Testament. The situation evidently appears to be that of one, who found himself in great danger, and whose life was threatened. But the Psalmist does not rest with the hope of obtaining deliverance from that particular danger; his soul rises higher; he triumphs, not only over the danger then present, but over death itself, exclaims, "Death where is thy sting, hell where is thy victory." The *ground* of hope is connected with that, which, for the moment, was necessary, and the hope itself is expressed more comprehensively. The assurance is declared quite generally, that death and the grave can exercise no power over him, who is inwardly united to the living God; of this he is confident, nor for the present moment merely, but for ever, ver. 11; and on that account, certainly for the present also, in respect to which he primarily gives utterance to the general hope.

Apart from Christ, this hope must be regarded as a chimera, which the issue would put to shame. David served God in his generation, and then he died, was buried, and corrupted. But in Christ, who has brought life and immortality to light, it becomes perfectly true. David, in Christ, could speak, as he does here, with full right. Christ has conquered death, not merely

for himself, but also for his members. His resurrection is the ground of our resurrection; for can the head fail to draw its members along with it? In so far as what is here hoped for to the members, can only be experienced by them, in consequence of its having first been experienced by the head, so far the Psalm must be considered as a prophecy of Christ.

But how far David himself clearly understood the Messianic subject of his hope, we cannot ascertain. That the prophecy in respect to Christ, was for him, not an altogether unknown one, the declaration of Peter in Acts ii. 30, 31, implies, while Paul stands simply on the ground, that the Psalm was fully verified in Christ. That the heroes of the Old Testament, in their more elevated moments, were favoured with a deep insight into the mystery of the future redemption, is affirmed by our Lord himself, John viii. 56. A more or less conscious connection between the hope of eternal life, and the expectation of Christ, is attended with the less difficulty, as this connection constantly appears, where we find, in later times, the hope of eternal life expressed in Isaiah, Ezechiel, Daniel.

Our explanation of the Messianic meaning substantially agrees with that of Calvin, which he has most clearly and distinctly unfolded in his Comm. on the Acts of the Apostles: "When he glories that he should not see the grave, so far as corruption was concerned, he doubtless considered himself as a member of Christ's body, by whom death is overcome, and its empire abolished. But if David promised himself deliverance from the grave, only in so far as he was a member of Christ, it hence appears, that from Christ, as the head, we must take our commencement."

Many of the older expositors, on the ground of the New Testament quotations of this Psalm, and not perceiving that the contrast in them lies, not between David and Christ, but between David, apart from Christ, and David in Christ, have maintained that the Psalm refers directly and exclusively to Christ, who is introduced speaking by the Psalmist. But against the Messianic interpretation thus understood, which was also vindicated in my Christology, there are certain difficulties not easily disposed of. That the Psalmist should, from the commencement, speak in the person of another, does not comport well with the prevailing subjective character of the Psalmodic poetry, and even from the circle of prophetic literature, scarcely can an

example be produced, where this is done so very immediately, without some more exact designation of the person going before. Then the matter in ver. 1—8 is too little of a Messianic character, as, indeed, is sadly betrayed, without being confessed by those who seek to bring out, by a forced meaning, a special Messianic element. Also, that in ver. 9—11, the direct and exclusive Messianic references rest only on a false exposition, has already been shown. Further, by this exposition the Psalm is wrested from its connection, with so many others, which unquestionably stand very closely related to it, and above all, with the following one, which is united with it into a pair. Finally, we are necessitated by this exposition, to hold the reading חסידיך in ver. 10, to be incorrect, which cannot be done, at least, with positive certainty, and the less so, when we compare it with Ps. xvii. 11, where, in like manner, the idea of number, concealed in unity, is fairly brought out.—The only apparent ground for this signification, the testimony of the New Testament, must certainly be regarded as quite decisive by any one who views it altogether apart by itself; but those will judge differently, who, taking properly into account the whole relation in which the New Testament stands to the Old, have attained to a comprehensive view of the free manner, in which our Lord and his apostles handle the application of prophecy.

PSALM XVII.

The situation here also, is that of one, who finds himself in great distress and danger, through hostile oppression. "We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth," "let every one that names the name of God, depart from iniquity," —therefore does the Psalmist first of all ground his supplication to be heard on his *righteousness*, which is so far from all hypocrisy, that it does not shun the most searching scrutiny of Divine omniscience, penetrating into the most secret recesses of the heart. He declares his firm conviction, that this scrutiny will bring to light no contrariety between heart and mouth, but rather a perfect harmony between the two, ver. 1—5. Then, upon the foundation thus laid, arises a more confidential and urgent prayer, which is called forth by the godless malice of the

wicked, copiously and forcibly delineated, as loudly calling for the interference of Heaven, and the conclusion embodies an expression of joyful hope in the salvation of the Lord, ver. 6—15.

The two parts of the Psalm, the first of which may be described as the porch, and the second as the proper building, present themselves to us as distinctly separate. The external dimensions of these parts are proportioned to their internal relation to each other. The introduction, declaring the indispensable condition of being heard, as possessed by the Psalmist, has five verses, the main burden of the Psalm is discharged in the number ten, the mark of completeness. To this the formal arrangement appears to be confined. We might, however, conceive another division, analogous to that pointed out in Psalm vii. of strophes, which have an ascending number of verses, only that the one, in which all the rest are enclosed, and into which they run out, instead of beginning, forms the conclusion: 2. 3. 4. 5. 1. Each of those strophes would really have pretty much its own proper ideas; ver. 1 and 2, the prayer of the Psalmist about his right, ver. 3—5, the grounding of this his right, ver. 6—9, his prayer for deliverance from the wicked who oppressed him, ver. 10—14, the grounding of this prayer, pointing to their disregard of all divine and human rights, which called aloud for the interposition of God, and to their hitherto prosperous condition, which, as being contrary to God's word and nature, could therefore not continue. Finally, in ver. 15 we have the expression of hope and confidence, in the salvation of the Lord. Still, this division cannot be held with the same confidence as the first; the last strophe especially, consisting of only one verse, renders it very doubtful.

If we suppose a particular occasion for the Psalm, we can only refer it to the times of Saul; of those of Absalom we cannot think, because the Psalmist appears through the whole as an oppressed individual. But the absence of all individual traits makes it already probable, that the Psalmist does not speak in his own person, but in that of the righteous; and this supposition is confirmed by ver. 11, where, precisely as in ver. 10 of the preceding Psalm, the diversity concealed under the unity comes distinctly out. The individual character is discountenanced also by the introduction, ver. 1—5, in which the didactic tendency, the purpose of directing the members of the church

to the fact, that righteousness is the indispensable, though also the sure foundation of the hearing of prayer, and the bestowment of salvation, can scarcely be overlooked.

This Psalm has many coincidences with Ps. xvi., which are so important, that they give colour to the idea of both Psalms having been united by the author into one pair. (Already Venema remarks: "Such is the agreement between this Psalm and the preceding one, that I am almost disposed to reckon them as one Psalm.") First, in both Psalms there is a formal arrangement, mainly distinguished by this, that the chief matter is thrown into the number ten, the same in both, excepting that in the former one the introduction consists only of one verse, while in the latter it occupies five. Then, the situation in both Psalms is precisely the same, that of one who is brought into immediate peril by the persecutions of wicked and ungodly enemies. Further, the conclusion of both Psalms remarkably agrees. And, finally, they present many striking coincidences in particular points; comp. the following expressions: here in ver. 7, "through thy right hand," with the same in Ps. xvi. 11, "thou deliverer of them that put their trust in thee," here in ver. 7, with "I put my trust in thee," in Ps. xvi. 1, "preserve me," here in ver. 8, with "preserve me," in Ps. xvi. 1, and the plurality which discovers itself in ver. 11, with the plural expression, "thy pious ones," in Ps. xvi. 10.

Taking into view these several points, they furnish us with the following result. David, while he would prepare a treasure of consolation and confidence for the sorely persecuted and oppressed out of his own experience during the times of Saul, presented it in a whole of two parts. Of the different subjects which thus come to be considered, those which respect confidence in the Lord, growing into the sure hope of salvation, the Psalmist's own righteousness, and the unrighteousness of his enemies, the first is handled in Ps. xvi., and the second and third in the Psalm before us. The subject with which he exclusively occupies himself in Ps. xvi., and which forms the proper theme of that Psalm, returns here in order to bring both into an organic connection, and to indicate the place which it should hold in the subordinate arrangement. After the Psalmist had solemnly protested before God his righteousness, he calls on God as the "deliverer of those that trust in him," implying as much as this, that where once a foundation of righteousness

exists, if only it be well grounded and in full measure, confidence attains to the prominent position which had been ascribed to it in Ps. xvi.

Besides this connection with Ps. xvi., there is one also, though not so close, with Ps. vii., which is of importance, especially in so far as it shows how, in David, the general raised itself out of the individual—how his own personal experience lies at the bottom even of those Psalms which he, from the first, indited as from the soul of the church, how he consoled others only with the consolation with which he himself had been comforted of God. As in Ps. vii. there was a porch of six, and a building of twelve verses, so we have here a porch of five, and a building of ten verses. In both Psalms also the ascent in the number of verses of which the strophes are composed is alike, in so far as this may be recognised to have any place in our Psalm. The matter of the introduction, the protestation of innocence and righteousness, is in both Psalms the same. Common to both, also, is the "arise," in Psalm vii. 6, and here, in verse 13, and the expression, "trier of the hearts and reins art thou, O righteous God," in Ps. vii. 10, agrees with the "proving of the heart," &c., in ver. 3 here, comp. also Ps. xi. 4, 5.

Finally, ver. 1—5, in this Psalm, coincides with Ps. xviii. 20—27. Just as here the prayer for deliverance is grounded on righteousness, so there the deliverance obtained was derived from righteousness. This coincidence has probably led the collector to place Ps. xviii. immediately after ours, a very fitting connection, since confidence in righteousness, as the ground of salvation, must grow when it is manifested as such in so glorious a manner by the events of experience.

The superscription: A prayer of David, can have had no other than David for its author, as appears from what was formerly remarked, though it is not to be understood to mark him as the one to whose circumstances the prayer refers. The superscription in Hab. iii. 1: A prayer of Habakkuk, formed after this, is quite analogous. For, in the whole chapter, the church, and not the prophet, is the speaker.

Ver. 1. *Hear righteousness, O Lord, attend to my cry, give ear to my prayer from lips without deceit.* The prayer is here still only as means to an end, only serves the purpose of introducing the Psalmist's protestation of righteousness; the proper commencement of the prayer is at ver. 6. The Psalmist begs

that the Lord would hear righteousness, instead of the righteous, with the view of giving emphasis to the fact, that he sought nothing from the holy and righteous God, with whom there is no respect of persons, out of party predilection or favouritism; that he laid claim to his help and salvation only in so far as righteousness appeared to be personified in him. He is inwardly penetrated by the conviction, that the *sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habeo*, of which men do but falsely boast, prevails with God, and in the fullest sense, and he will have this conviction also to take hold of others. It has often been found a stone of stumbling, that the Psalmist seems here to make his reception of the Divine help depend on a condition, which lies beyond the reach of sinful men. Several expositors have been induced thereby, either to refer the Psalm exclusively to Christ, or at least, to maintain that it has its full truth only in Christ. So Amyrald remarks: "In the exposition of this Psalm, and of some others, the left eye must be fixed on David, that the right may be kept intent on Christ." Luther says: "The Hebrew text says plainly, Lord hear the righteousness, without having the word *my* attached to it. We would here overlook the error of the Jews, who feign, that David deserved afterwards to be allowed to fall into adultery, since he here boasts of his righteousness; and would only think of this, that some of our own also have taken such offence at this word, as to have ascribed the whole of this discourse to Christ." Others seek to help themselves by substituting the righteousness of the cause for that of the thing. So Luther: "He says, though I who beg, do indeed possess no righteousness as to my person, yet is the cause in itself worthy, because it concerns thy word and the faith, and is truly righteousness, that thou shouldst not leave it to be oppressed;" and Venema, who gives a somewhat different delineation of the idea: "Righteous is my cause, which I bring before thee, O God, and I have neither in thought, in word, nor deed, been guilty of any such things as they lay to my charge, and on account of which I am persecuted." To the like effect also, J. H. Michaelis, De Wette, and others. But it is to be objected to this, that neither here, nor in the succeeding verses, is a trace to be found of any special reference to the particular cause: righteousness and integrity in general the Psalmist ascribes to himself, protests that his heart is pure and upright, and that he constantly adheres to the ways of God. Of the righteousness of his cause, the parallel

section in Ps. xviii. 21, ss., leaves no room to doubt. And, finally, even the righteousness of the cause is not of itself sufficient to form a foundation for the hope of deliverance; it is possible for the wicked also to have a righteous cause, without obtaining thereby any claim on the Divine help. The righteousness of the cause at any time can only be of importance, in so far as it is the indication of the righteousness of the person; and hence the Psalmist, even if he did in the first instance assert the righteousness merely of his cause, would still, at the same time, be taking into account the righteousness of his person. The legitimate removal of the difficulty presents itself, whenever the idea of personal righteousness, which the Psalmist assumes to himself, is more definitely fixed: it is not a perfect holiness—how far David was from laying claim to that, appears from such expressions as Ps. cxliii. 2, "enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified," Ps. xix. 13,—it is the upright moral striving, the sincere bent of mind earnestly reaching after the fulfilment of the Divine law, on the existence of which God graciously pardons many weaknesses. Righteousness in this sense, forms as certainly a distinguishing feature of the elect, an indispensable condition of Divine help, as that the true religion bears throughout an ethical character, and that it addresses to those, who dream of being able to find God with cold feelings, the solemn admonition, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." It is not less required in the New Testament, than it was in the Old. John, indeed, says in his First Ep. i. 8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" but he says also, ch. iii. 6, "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not, (leads no life of sin—sin being used there in the narrower sense, just as righteousness here;) whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him," and in ver. 9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." That *here* the righteousness can only be referred to the whole tenor of the life, may be inferred already from the contrast in ver. 1 and 3, with hypocrisy. To draw a more exact line of demarcation between the righteousness of endeavour, and absolute sinlessness, must have been all the more removed from the Psalmist's mind, as, amid the deep consciousness of human guilt, which was peculiar to the Old Testament, the idea of the latter would just as little occur to him as to his readers. As he here brings into

view the one side, righteousness, because this alone belonged to the case now in hand, so elsewhere he in like manner brings the other distinctly forward, without thinking perhaps of the one implying the exclusion of the other. There are times also when the prayer: Hear righteousness, O God, is for us the only suitable one, and others again, when the *juste judex ultionis, donum fac remissionis ante diem ultionis*, rushes with power from the heart. Besides, it is quite right what the Berleb. Bible says: "The soul is never in a state to desire, that its righteousness might be heard, it must already have lost all its own righteousness." The righteousness which the Psalmist here urges, is righteousness merely in a germinating condition, but still it always germinates out of the ground of pardon of sin, which presupposes the renouncement of all one's own righteousness. Righteousness of life is the fruit of righteousness of faith, according to the Old Testament plan, as most clearly laid down in Ps. li., as also according to that of the New Testament. Still, we must not here, against the plain letter, put the righteousness of faith in the room of righteousness of life. The question here does not respect justification, but has to do with help against enemies, and deliverance from distress, which can only be claimed on the ground of an already existing righteousness of life.

The majority of expositors consider the second petition as comprised in the words: attend to my cry, and the words: with lips without deceit, as belonging solely to the third. According to them we have a twofold ground, on which the Psalmist rests his prayer; first the righteousness of his cause, (or of his person), —then his faith, which impelled him to seek help from God, and would not be ashamed of God. They maintain that the first requisite could have existed without the latter. "It often happens," remarks Calvin, "that even profane men justly boast of having a good cause; yet, because they do not consider that God governs the world, they sink down into the region of their own consciences, and, chafing at the rein, they bear injuries indignantly, and not patiently, seeking no consolation from faith in God, and supplication to him." The Psalmist must then, in the last member, have united both elements together. But it is decisive against this view, that according to the whole tenor of the first part, it is impossible for any other point beside righteousness, to be brought out in a substantive form; the oneness of

the discourse is broken, whenever the petition: attend to my cry, is taken away from its connection with what follows. The *crying*, like the *prayer*, is in place here, only in so far as it is done *by lips without deceit*. That these words belong to both the last petitions, is supported also by the accentuation, which is against the too close and exclusive connection with the third. Every one has lips of deceit, who comes before God praying and professing to seek for salvation, without being a righteous person. For, as it is certain that salvation is bestowed only on the ground of righteousness, that God only hears the righteous so in every prayer there is, at the same time, contained a declaration of righteousness, whether it might be uttered in words or not. Whosoever prays without being a righteous person, is a hypocrite of the worst kind; not content with deceiving men thereby, he would also impose on the all-seeing God, imagining, in the blindness of his folly, that God looks only on his appearance, and not on his heart.

Ver. 2. *Let my right go forth from thee, let thine eyes behold uprightness.* The fut. of the verb may be regarded as expressive, either of the wish or of the hope. Both are much alike as to the sense. The emphasis, in each case, is upon the משפטי, and on the מישרים. Only upon the ground of his right and his integrity, does he either expect or desire God's help. The word: my right, (Luther, falsely: speak thou in my cause,) stands opposed to partial favouritism: it is not this the Psalmist desires, but only the salvation which God, the righteous One, has promised to righteousness: and because he desires only this, only what God must necessarily grant, and cannot refuse, without denying his own nature, and the expression thereof in his word, the prayer cannot possibly remain unheard, just as little as it could have been heard, if it had not sprung from such a root, if the Divine help had been looked for, as a reward of merely saying, Lord, Lord. In the second member, the uprightness is for being seen, as in ver. 1, the righteousness for being heard. Because with a righteous judge, uprightness is to be recognised and delivered, it is said of God's perception, that he does not see uprightness, when he allows it to be overborne. We must reject the exposition of Hitzig and De Wette, who taking מישרים adverbially, render: thine eyes behold rightly. The word signifies, not rectitude, but integrity, honesty; it is never used adverbially, not even in Psalm lviii. 1; neither in it-

self is it suitable, nor is it agreeable to the context, to say that God, but that the Psalmist is upright, the uprightness lies in one line with the righteousness, the lips without deceit, the right. The words, "his countenance beholds the upright," in Ps. xi. 7, are parallel. Luther remarks: "So that we see, how everywhere zeal and hatred break forth against hypocrisy, which the saints avoid with as great a horror in themselves, as they bring accusations against it."

Ver. 3. The Psalmist had grounded his prayer for help in the preceding context on his righteousness. That this indispensable condition of salvation actually existed in him, that he does not think merely of feigning righteousness before the eyes of short-sighted men, he will therefore (woe to him who cannot do the same) appeal to the judgment of the all-seeing God, who knows the purity of his heart, of which the inmost recesses are often before him. Luther: "he had prayed, that the Lord would regard his righteousness; now he declares what sort of confidence he had to rest on, in begging this." *Thou provest my heart, thou examinest it by night, thou purgest me, thou findest not, my thought oversteps not my mouth.* The preterites of the verb mark the past reaching into the present. The Psalmist refers to the result of trials already held; God is constantly putting men to the proof; and there is no reason for our expounding, with some: when thou provest, &c., thou findest not, or with others, to put a demand in the place of a simple declaration. The night is named as the time, when good and evil thoughts in the soul of man spring up in greatest force, because he is then free from outward business and occupation, and because they have nothing to scatter them, and are not restrained by any regard to, or fear of others. That the Psalm was an evening song, is rendered probable by this alone, comp. on ver. 15. In the words: thou purgest, or purifiest me, reference is made to the purifying of gold and silver. Pure gold and silver is what can stand the trial without separating from it any dross. Dereser expounds falsely: Thou purgest and purifiest me through tribulations from defects. There is nothing here, of what elsewhere is often handled, of a purifying through tribulation. God's proving is only in so far represented under the image of purifying, as in both alike, a sure result is accomplished regarding the purity or impurity of the object, comp. Prov. xvii. 3. *Thou findest not*, namely, any thing that would show the affir-

mation I made of my righteousness to be untrue, or prove me to be a hypocrite; one who presents a fair exterior, but within is full of ravening and unrighteousness. It is obvious, that the purity and righteousness of heart, which the Psalmist here lays claim to, forms no contrast to the testimony, that the righteous falls seven times a-day. This is clear, especially from the last words, which show, that the Psalmist only asserts his freedom from *hypocrisy*, and not from *frailty*. We take זִמֹּתִי as inf. from זמם. The fem. form of the inf. in [illegible] according to this form of verbs in ע״ע occurs in Ps. lxxiii. 9, Ez. xxxvi. 3. It is to be explained by the relation of verbs ע״ע and ל״ה. The זמותי is accus., the יי nominative. That the common sequence of the words is departed from, the object preceding the subject, arises from this, that it was not the mouth, but the thought, the state of feeling, which was the object of the Divine search; comp. the words: thou provest my heart. From the proving of his internal disposition, the result is brought out, that the Psalmist's mouth had not exceeded, when, coming before God, he gave himself out as a righteous person. Luther, though he errs in his translation, yet explains quite correctly in his comment: "The mouth overpasses the thoughts, when it utters more, and otherwise, than the heart thinks, so that the mouth and heart do not correspond with each other." We must reject the other expositions. Gesenius takes זמתי as the plural of זַמָּה, which must be of like import with זְמָם, and explains: my thoughts overstep not my mouth. But we conceive that this contains three verbal difficulties—זַמָּה never occurs elsewhere, the singular suffix in זמתי would stand in the room of the plural זְמֹתַי, the verb in the sing. masc. would be joined to a noun in the plural fem.—and the meaning, purchased at so dear a rate, is after all not suitable. The question is not, whether the Psalmist thinks otherwise than he speaks, but whether he speaks otherwise than he thinks,—nor whether his feeling agrees with his words, but whether his words agree with his feeling—comp. the expression, "not with deceitful lips," in ver. 1. He appears before God asserting his righteousness, and the proving of his heart shows that his mouth has spoken the truth. Others take זמתי as the first person preterite. So Luther: I have purposed to myself, that my mouth shall not transgress. But this exposition is against the accents, according to which

the word has the tone upon the last syllable; and the sense, besides, is a quite unsuitable one: the transgressing of the mouth is out of place here. Ewald, De Wette, and Koester, connect זמתי with the preceding: Thou dost not find me thinking evil, my mouth oversteps not. But the external authorities of the accents, the Masorah, and the old translations, are all against it; the expression: my meditating, for: that I meditate evil, is hard: the עבר cannot, without some addition, signify *to do wrong*, and the proving of the heart has nothing to do with the transgressions of the mouth. According to the connection, the only thing here in question is, whether the declarations of the mouth are confirmed by the condition of the heart. That the *heart*, with its thoughts and inclinations, should here appear as the proper seat of righteousness, and that the hope of salvation was considered well grounded only where the heart did not need to shun the sharpest divine trial, is decisive as to the moral platform of the Old Testament, which, even in its original and primary principles of duty, does not confine itself to word and deed, but extends it over the whole region of thoughts and inclinations.

Ver. 4. *As for the doing of man: by the word of thy lips I observe the ways of the trangressor.* The Psalmist protests that he constatnly keeps far away from the paths of transgressors, while, at the same time, he points to what lay near him, the treading of these paths, as the common bent of the corrupt heart in all men, and to the guide, that he carefully followed the word of God. ל is not rarely used, especially at the beginning of a passage, in the signification of, "in reference to," "in respect of," "as regards," see Gesen. *Thes.* p. 732. פעלות stands in its common meaning, *doing, manner of acting*, 2 Chron. xv. 7, Jer. xxxi. 16, Ps. xxviii. 5. The doing of man is the course of action that is natural to man, in whom the imagination of the heart is only evil from his youth, and that continually, (Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21,) who has been born in guilt, and conceived by his mother in iniquity, (Ps. li. 5.) It is one of the strongest testimonies for the natural corruption of man, that a corrupt line of action, a walking in the ways of the transgressor, is here spoken of simply as the doing of man. There is a parallel passage in 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, where David says to Saul, "wherefore hearest thou men's words:" and in Hos. vi. 7, "and they as men transgress the covenant," (Manger: more humano levitatis; Hitzig's exposi-

tion: like Adam, deserves rejection simply on the ground that Adam did not transgress the covenant;) also, in Job xxxi. 33, where hypocrisy is described without further explanation as natural to man, "If I covered my trangressions as man, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom," and in Job xxiii. 12, where the law of man, the course of life which his natural inclination leads him to take, is marked as directly opposed to the law of God, "More than my law I have respected the words of thy mouth." We should, then, entirely mistake if, by the doing of man, we were to think merely of the power of evil example, which would also be against the parallel passages now adduced, and likewise against the quite analogous declaration in Ps. xviii. 23, "And I kept myself from mine iniquity." The Psalmist does not place himself in contrast to men, but comprehends himself under them. That evil-doing is the doing of man, this is what renders it so exceedingly difficult to restrain himself from the paths of the transgressor, which one has not first to be at pains to discover, but into which one is apt to slip quite naturally and unperceived. Whosoever would shun them, he has not simply to follow his natural disposition, but must deny it. Many expound: by the doing of men; but this signification of the ל is doubtful, (comp. Gesen. *Thes.* p. 733,) and the sense is rendered tame by such an exposition, as the Psalmist would then except himself from the number of men. The exposition: in the word of thy lips, has respect to the authority which the Psalmist followed in shunning the ways of the violent, to which natural inclination drew him, or to that from which he received an impulse in the better direction. The ב is that through which the relation of effect to cause is marked: in the word = upon the word. בדבר is used precisely in the same way in Numb. xxxi. 16, "these taught the children of Israel upon the word of Balaam, unfaithfulness to the Lord,"—the word of Balaam the cause, in which the effect abides, that from which the impulse proceeds, the authority—1 Chron. xxi. 19, "upon the word of God," comp. the במצות דוד, upon the command of David, on the *ground*, of his command, in 2 Chron. xxix. 25. The word of God is the only light upon the otherwise dark ways of men; from it alone can the good impulse proceed, through which we keep ourselves unspotted from the world within and without us, withstand the corrupt inclinations of nature, and the spirit of the world, swim against the stream which, with gigantic and re-

sistless force, carries everything along with it. The contrast here implied between men's natural inclination and the word of God, is already supposed as the basis of the Decalogue. It has given rise to the negative form which predominates in the ten commandments. Everywhere is this forced on our notice: whereto thy corrupt heart is prone, just as in a command in the positive form there is this: *consider*, pointing to the tendency toward corruption.

The אני is used emphatically in opposition to the enemies, the wicked, who, according to ver. 11, direct their eyes to turn aside in the land. שמר, to observe, in connection with the way, commonly with the design of keeping it, comp. Ps. xviii. 21, Job xxiii. 11, only here with the design of shunning it. The Psalmist places his observation of the way of the transgressor under the guidance of the word of God, against the foolish eagerness, with which the world blindly clings to it; yet so, that there is probably a sharp allusion to this current mode of expression: I have, observing the ways of God, in order to keep myself upon them, at the same time, observed the ways of the transgressor, in order to shun them—a reference which discovers itself more plainly, as soon as we perceive a break in the thoughts after שמרתי. The verb פרץ, to break through, is used in Hos. iv. 2, of the breaking through of all the limitations of good and right, and from it the term פריץ, *the transgressor*. Luther's translation: I keep myself in the word of thy lips from the work of man upon the path of the murderer, gives, upon the whole, the true sense, only that for *transgressor*, the far too specia land gross name of *murderer* is substituted.

Ver. 5. *My steps hold fast by thy paths, my feet slide not.* The paths of God, which the Psalmist held fast by, stand opposed to the way of the transgressor, which he shunned. The Psalm contains still, like the preceding one, a protestation of the Psalmist's righteousness, and forms a suitable conclusion to the whole section, ver. 1—5, which alone is taken up with that. Exactly parallel is Job xxiii. 11, "My foot holdeth fast, אחזה, his steps; his way have I kept and not declined." "To the protestation of his innocence," remarks De Wette, "the Psalmist adds, besides, a prayer, that that might be preserved, that moral power might be given him." But the sense which this exposition affords, is so unsuitable to the context, that any other might be held equally valid; we should then have an isolated

thought, a real ejaculation before us. The Psalm has certainly nothing to do with a prayer for moral support. The object of prayer with him is merely salvation from the enemies, grounded upon his own righteousness already existing, and the wickedness of his enemies. Then, the exposition is also objectionable in a verbal point of view. The inf. absol., bringing out the simple action, always receives its immediate determination from the context. But this here points decidedly to the preterite, that goes before, and follows in the parallelism. תמך, to seize, take hold, never signifies, with ב, *to hold up*, but always to *take hold of, to hold to, to keep fast by*, comp. Ps. lxiii. 8, where the idea of holding fast is required by the parallelism, "My soul cleaveth to thee, thy hand holdeth me fast," Ps. xli. 12; Ex. xvii. 12; Isa. xlii. 1.

Ver. 6. The prayer of the Psalmist, which had only been indicated before, comes out in full force now, when the right foundation has been laid in the righteousness of the Psalmist, as it afterwards acquires a second foundation, that of the wickedness of the enemies, which was for God a call to vengeance. *I call upon thee, for thou God hearest me, incline thine ear to me, hear my speech.* The תענני is either: Thou wilt hear me, or: Thou oughtest to hear me. The latter view is supported by the corresponding words in next verse: Thou deliverer of those, &c. Luther: "It comprehends both in itself, the past as well as the future. The meaning of it appears to be this: I have confidence, that my words shall not be in vain, since I know how, according to thy grace, thou art wont to hear me. Hence the compassion of God is celebrated, which consists in this, that he hears when we cry. This moves us, and is the cause why we can presume to call." By the exposition: Thou *wilt* hear me, the Psalmist would refer to his righteousness, as set forth in the preceding context. To this likewise points the אני, I, the righteous person.

Ver. 7. *Single out thy loving-kindnesses, thou deliverer of the confiding from the revolters, by thy right hand.* Upon הפלה *to single out, separate*, not to make wonderful, comp. on Ps. iv. 3. The tokens of favour which the Psalmist desires, must be separated from the circle of common ones. This points to the greatness of the danger. De Wette thinks, that this very presumptuous-looking prayer, like the similar one following, should be ascribed to the spirit of Hebraism, which still knew not the

resigned spirit of Christianity. But if this prayer be presumptuous, so also is the prayer of the Canaanitish woman, who also supplicated: "Single out thy mercies, have compassion on me, O Lord, for my daughter is tormented;" and yet the Lord does not appear to have regarded it so, otherwise he would not have replied to her: "O woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee as thou wilt." If the Stoic resignation of De Wette were Christian, then Christ's wonder-working activity were unchristian, and the prayer also for our daily bread, in the Lord's prayer, would be the same. Were a doctrine so inhuman Christian, then the Old Testament, which places the whole human race in a relation to God, would stand higher than the New. The words: thou deliverer of those, &c., contain the ground of the Psalmist's hope of being heard. Calvin: "As often as we draw near to God, we ought first to bear in mind that we are not to be afraid of God's being ready to help us, because he is not in vain called the deliverer of those who put their trust in him." The חֹסֶה is used in Prov. xiv. 32, absolutely, as here, without any designation of what the confidence is placed on. With those who revolt or rise, the object of resistance can be no other than, with those who confide, the less so, as, in the latter case, the person on whom the confidence is placed is not named. The former, therefore, could only be revolters against God. Luther: "By this he seeks to bring his enemies into great hatred, as persons whose madness swelled against God." בִּמִינֶךָ is to be coupled with מוֹשִׁיעַ: thou who deliverest by thy right hand; it points to the plenitude of power with which God is provided for the defence of his people. That we must not expound: from those who rebel against thy right hand, as Luther, or: who confide upon thy right hand, from those who oppose themselves, appears by a comparison with Psalm xvi. 11, and v. 14, here, and by what was already remarked by Venema: "The pious are more properly said to be preserved by the right hand of God, than enemies attacking the pious, to rise up against it." Luther: "See how quickly affection makes an excellent orator. He recommends to God his cause in the most favourable light, he seeks to put himself in good terms with him, he makes complaint against his adversaries, he tries to have these made hateful, and this he does in very few and urgent words. But he does so, not as if these were necessary for God, in order that he might be prevailed on, but for the sake of faith. For

the more vigorous and fervent our faith is, the more always does God work through it."

Ver. 8. *Keep me as the apple of the eye, in the shadow of thy wings hide me.* That reference is made in the first member to Deut. xxxii. 10, "he kept him (Israel) as the apple of his eye, is the more probable, as there the similitude of the eagle caring for her young ones, immediately follows. Upon אישון, not the dim. of man, little man, but the male, see my work, Balaam, p. 98. בת עין, prop. the eye's daughter; son and daughter, in the Semitic dialects, are applied to what belongs to another, or is dependent on him, for example, arrows are named, in Lam. iii. 13, "sons of the quiver." Luther: "In this verse he employs many words to say one and the same thing; since he magnifies the danger, and through the affection of his deep grief would give it to be understood as if he could not be kept secure enough from the snares of the wicked. Therefore, in these words, there is embodied the emotion of a person oppressed with fear, and who flees from a very great danger; such as we observe in little children, who run to the lap of their parents, and hang around their neck, when they are alarmed at danger." The figure in the second member is found enlarged in Matth. xxiii. 37, probably in allusion to this passage.

Ver. 9. *From the wicked, who disperse me, mine enemies, who against the soul compass me about.* Many interpreters take שדד in the Arabic sense of *seizing hold,* but the Hebrew one is quite suitable, if it is only observed that the Psalmist represents himself under the image of one scattered by the enemy, or of a land laid waste. שֹׁדְדוּ is also used in Judg. v. 27, of a slain man. בנפש prop. in soul, in the matter of life, so that it is equivalent to life. Many expound it after the example of Abenezra, by: in desire. But in doing so they overlook the reference which the words: deliver my soul, have to the בנפש here. "They think to destroy my soul," in Psalm xl. 14, is parallel.

Ver. 10. *Their fat they close up, with their mouth they speak proudly.* How the expression: their fat they close up, is to be understood—that it is, q. d. they have closed it upon one another, wholly covered themselves in fat, appears from Judg. iii. 22, "the fat closed upon the blade." The fat here, however, is not corporeal but spiritual; it denotes the spiritual deadness, and hardening, by which their whole mind was overlaid. In

this sense fat is very often used. So, first, in the ground-passage, Deut. xxxii. 15, "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered," where many quite erroneously think of an external condition, a state of prosperity granted by God; a view, which leaves the sudden address and the threefold repetition altogether unexplained. The discourse is rather of becoming fat internally, which takes place in consequence of what is external. Then Job xv. 27, "Because he covered his face with his fatness, and made collops of fat upon his flanks," where the fat, from the connection, can only be understood morally—for the verse contains the ground of a proud revolt against God—q. d. he resembles such an one spiritually who covers his bodily face, &c., he is spiritually as devoid of feeling, as that person is corporeally; comp. Ps. cxix. 70, where the abbreviated comparison comes out in a complete form, "their heart is as fat as grease." Finally, Psalm lxxiii. 7, "Their eyes stand out with fatness." Modern expositors, for the most part, suppose that the חֵלֶב, from the contrast with the mouth, must necessarily mean the *heart*. Rosenmüller, departing from the Hebrew signification of that word, attributes to it, from the Arabic, precisely the import of *heart*. Others leave to it its common and alone certain signification, but maintain that your fat, &c., is as much as your fat, unfeeling heart. So Ewald: "While from hardness they have closed their unfeeling heart against compassion, their haughty mouth opens itself so much the wider for reproach." But there is no ground for such an interpretation, as, according to our view also, full justice is done to the contrast with the mouth; the closing in of the fat, the covering itself in fat, marks a state of heart and mind. And on the other hand, we can appeal to the parallel passages which everywhere speak, not of unfeeling hardness toward brethren, but of spiritual indifference and hardihood in general, also to the fact that the expression of inclosing the heart, as a description of unfeeling hardness, is found nowhere else in the Old Testament, and finally, to the consideration that the inclosing of the heart in this connection is too tame. פִּימוֹ like אֲשֻׁרֵנוּ in ver. 11, and חֹרְבָךְ in ver. 13, the accusative, after their mouth, with their mouth. The predilection for this sort of accus. is one of the peculiarities of our Psalm.

Ver. 11. *After our steps they compass me about now, they direct their eyes, to turn aside in the land.* אֲשֻׁרֵנוּ, after our steps, wherein we continually turn ourselves, everywhere our

enemies pursue us, and cut off from us all escape, take from us every hope of deliverance. To take the word with some as nom. absol. does not accord with the predilection just noticed, which the Psalmist here shows for this sort of accusative. For the more difficult reading of the text סבבוני, explicable on the consideration that the speaker is the *righteous* person, so that he can speak in the sing. of himself, not less than in the plural (comp. the sing. in reference to enemies in ver. 12), the Masorites have put סְבָבוּנוּ, they have compassed *us* about, corresponding to the suffix in אשרנו. The Psalmist has certainly conjoined thus closely the sing. and the plural, on purpose to show that behind the ideal one there was concealed a multiplicity. The *now* points to this, that the greatest danger had arrived, and consequently also the time for God to help. לנטות בארץ is commonly explained: in order to cast down to the earth, or in the land. This mode of explanation does not require us to supply, with De Wette, *me* or *us;* but we must consider, as the object of the throwing down, all that which is high or stands erect. Calvin: "The godless, as if they must fall, when the world stands, could see the whole human race destroyed, and hence they apply themselves with vigour to throw everything to the ground." But it is against this exposition, that while נטה can properly enough be taken in the sense of bending or bowing, comp. lxii. 3, "a bowing wall," yet, in the present connection, that is too flat; not so, however, to beat down, to throw to the ground. The right exposition discovers itself by a comparison with ver. 5. Whilst the righteous directs his eye to the object of holding fast by the ways of the Lord, *they* are equally zealous and bent on turning aside from God's ways, and hence are as much the objects of God's punishing as the others of his saving energy. נטה is employed to designate the turning aside from God, from his ways and his laws, and to set up this as the very drift of life, is to sin boldly and with a high hand, it is a mark of the most thorough abandonment. Comp., for example, Job xxxi. 7, "If my foot hath turned out of the way; 1 Kings xi. 9, "And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel." Psalm cxix. 51, 157. נטה to turn aside, as here, is used absolutely for turning out of the way, in Jer xiv. 8. On בארץ, not upon earth, but in the land, in the land of the Lord, Ps. xvi. 3.

Ver. 12. *He is like a lion greedy to tear in pieces, and a young*

lion, lying in covert. Luther: "But the pride and haughtiness of Moab is greater than his strength. He undertakes more than he can execute." The sing. suffix is here also to be explained thus, that the whole host of wicked ones is represented in one person.

Ver. 13. *Arise, O Lord, surprise him, cast him down, deliver my soul from the wicked through thy sword.* The *presence* is named, because this threatened destruction to the Psalmist, comp. the מִפְּנֵי in ver. 3. קִדְּמָם, to come before, then to surprise, is used, as here, in Ps. xcv. 2, with פָּנִים. The חַרְבֶּךָ, as to thy sword, through thy sword. The Jewish expositors generally: from the ungodly, who is thy sword; and so also in the following verse, where Luther joins himself to them by rendering: from the men, who are thy hand; overlooking, however, the Psalmist's marked predilection for the accusative, and, besides, disregarding the connection, which does not suit with such a method of considering the enemies as that used in Isa. x. 5, where Assyria is called the rod of Divine wrath. This trait would have broken the strength of the Psalmist's prayer, which leans upon his righteousness and the enemies' wickedness.

Ver. 14. *From the men through thy hand, O Lord, from the men of continuance, whose portion in life, and for whom with thy treasures thou fillest their body; they have sons the fulness, and leave their overflowings to their children.* The Psalmist believes that he can the more confidently present the prayer uttered in the preceding context, and hope with the greater certainty for its fulfilment, since it does not consist with God's nature and word, that those who, in alienation from God, despise him, and lift themselves proudly up against him, should be richly endowed by him with goods, and become partakers of the blessing which is promised to the righteous. This contrast between the reality and the idea, must God, as certainly as he is God, remove by his judgment; he must take away the irregularity which is so very singular, of strengthening the wicked in his wickedness, and letting the pious fail in his piety, and which can only be regarded as a temporary and passing state of things. Preparation is made for the contrast which is here unfolded between the reality and the idea, by קוּמָה, stand up, arise, of the preceding verse, which presupposes the existence of such a contrast. The repetition of מִמְתִים is emphatical, as was justly remarked by Calvin. The discourse upon the

contrast is interrupted by the sword. מחלד is in substance correctly expounded by Calvin: Qui sunt a seculo. By the preposition, says he, David expresses, that they had not raised themselves as of yesterday, but that their prosperity had already continued for a long series of years, which, however, must be made to vanish in a moment. So also Venema, according to whom, the מתים מחלד are those who have been formed by flourishing and continuing in prosperity. That the primary signification of חלד is that of *continuance*, appears from the Arabic. Dscheuhari in Scheid. in cant. Hisk. p. 51, says: "חלד denotes continuation of existence; it is used concerning man, when he abides and flourishes." From this primary signification, which here obtains, flow in Heb. the two derived ones of life and the world. Life is named continuance, as what usually belongs to being, comp. Job xi. 17, Ps. lxxxix. 47, xxxix. 5, in which two latter passages allusion is made to the primary import; in the last: חלדי, my life, which has its name from continuance, is as nothing before thee.

The world bears the name of *continuance*, as the general, abiding, while particular appearances are transitory. In Arabic chytropodes, rupes et saxa dicuntur חולד, quia semper manent, deleantur licet domuum, &c. vestigia, Dscheuh. by Scheid. So in Ps. xlix. 1, חלד is used of the world. Hezekiah alludes to the ישבי חלד there, the inhabitants of continuance, when, in Isa. xxxviii. 11, he calls the dwellers in Sheol ישבי חדל, inhabitants of ceasing, an allusion which presupposes that חלד, even when used of the world, retains its common signification. Parallel to the expression here, "of continuance," is that in Ps. x. 5, "His ways are strong at all times."—Most modern expositors, after the example of Luther, render: of the people of this world, *i. e.* as De Wette remarks, whose whole striving terminates on this temporal, perishable world, and does not pass over into eternity; חלד marks the temporal, perishing, sensible, as opposed to what is eternal, above sense. But a false meaning is forced by this exposition upon the word. It signifies neither, as Gesenius maintains, vita eaque cito praeterlabens, fluxa et caduca—for in Ps. lxxxix. 47, xxxix. 5, the idea of fleetness, and transitoriness, which is not suitable in Job xi. 17, does not exist in the word itself, but in the connection—nor hic mundus, cujus res fluxae et caducae sunt. In order to obtain this signification, we must violently tear the Heb. חלד from the Arabic. Further,

a contrast between the temporal and the eternal, so sharply expressed, and so briefly indicated, cannot be looked for in the Psalms. It will not do to compare the *οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*, of the New Testament, as the contrast here rests upon a clear recognition of a future state of being. In such a contrast also, we should have expected the article. Finally, what follows the words: whose part in life, cannot possibly be understood otherwise than of the prosperous condition of the ungodly. According to this, however, the beginning of the verse must refer, not to the disposition, but to the lot of the wicked. The verse is miserably torn asunder, if this reference is overlooked.

חלקם בחיים is better rendered than: whose portion is in life—who have their firm and secure portion therein, thus: whose part in life is, so that life is the territory on which they obtain their part, their fortune; comp. חלק in this signification for ex. in Job xx. 29, "This is the portion of the wicked man from God," xxvii. 13, xxxi. 2, 3, "For what portion of God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high? Is not misfortune to the wicked, and misery to the evil-doers?" which last passage especially serves to throw light on the one before us, whose lamentation it responds to. *Life* stands here in an emphatic sense for prosperous life, because a disastrous one is rather to be accounted a death: their part is, that they live and prosper. Calvin: "I understand these words to mean, that they are free from all discomfort, and riot in joy, and therefore are quite exempt from the general lot, as inversely is said of the miserable man, that his part is in death." Expositors generally interpret it: who are of an earthly disposition. The portion, according to De Wette, means the highest good or aim, life being put in opposition to eternity after death. But as both the preceding and the subsequent context refers to the lot of the wicked, this word cannot possibly denote their disposition; and that חיים by itself, can denote the earthly life as opposed to the eternal, is destitute of all proof. Such a contrast of necessity requires a more pointed description.—צפינך, for which the Masorites, without any necessity, would substitute צפונך, the part. pas., properly: thy concealed. "Calvin: "The concealed goods of God here mean rare and peculiar dainties, since God often endows the wicked, not merely with all the common comforts of life, but also with such as are of a singular nature. This is a strong temptation, when any one

estimates God's favour by earthly prosperity. But we must remember, that by the complaint of the pious man, it is enlightenment that is sought, and not a murmuring against God, so that we here also learn to direct our sighs toward heaven." The state of things in which the wicked, who lie under the Divine anger, are replenished by him with goods and gifts, considered as a permanent one, would be the perverse world, but on that very account it cannot possibly be a permanent state.—ישבעו בנים is rendered by Luther: Who have children the fulness, and he remarks: "This refers not merely to the great number of children, but rather to their state and condition, quite correctly, since it is only strong and healthful children that can be considered as a token of prosperity. But according to the current exposition, בנים is to be taken as the nominative, not as the accus.: full are their children; De Wette: They hunger not, like the children of the poor, who cry for bread. The first construction is the only right one. It is supported by the want of the suffix, and the analogy of the declaration: I shall be *satisfied* with thy likeness. It is further supported by the parallel passages, in which a blooming host of children is spoken of as a reward for the fear of God, comp. Ps. cxxvii. 3, "Lo children are an heritage of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is his reward;" Ps. cxxviii. 3, 4, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house," &c. "Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord;" or complaint is made, that this blessing, which properly belongs only to the righteous, is lavished on the ungodly, comp. Job xxi. 11, "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance," magna foecunditate emittunt, (Michaelis) in contrast to the pious Job, who lost all his children.—The expression, they leave their superfluity to their children, can only refer to the outward appearance. For God is even called upon to interpose against the parents themselves, and bring on their ruin. That they leave their overflowing abundance to their children, this does not appear from the seemingly well-grounded prosperity of their house notwithstanding their confidence in this respect, and the reality which decidedly favours it, for God has threatened the ungodly in his word, that he would punish their sins in themselves and in their children even to the third and the fourth generation. That word of God gives a fearful emphasis to the prayer of the Psalmist; Arise, O Lord.

Ver. 15. The prayer uttered in the preceding verses, already contains in itself the kernel of hope and confidence, in consequence of the ground upon which it is raised, the contrast, in which the reality, considered as a permanent one, stands to God's word and nature. That kernel comes here into development. "The Psalmist raises himself on the wings of faith to a serene repose, in which he sees every thing in order. He mocks the proud boasting of the enemy, and although, as it seemed, quite cast off by God, he still promises himself the enjoyment ere long of his confiding look." *I shall behold thy face in righteousness, satisfy myself when I awake with thy form.* The אני with emphasis, *I*, very different from my enemies, for whom the Lord is preparing destruction. Righteousness is here, according to the common view, named as the ground upon which the Psalmist rests his hope of seeing the face of God. As matters then stood, his righteousness appeared to be of no avail, as to God's making any thing out of it. But [illegible] as it is, that God is righteous, such a state of things could not be lasting, the Psalmist's righteousness must still bear its proper fruit. We must also expound: as a righteous, or justified person, and it is in favour of this exposition that we should have expected with the first to have found the suffix. Now the Psalmist would represent himself through his condition as an unrighteous person. But he trusts the righteous God will represent him as the person he really is, as in point of fact justified, so that the righteousness comes here into consideration as the gift of God. The words: *I shall behold thy face*, refer to ver. 2, where the Psalmist wishes that his right might come forth from God's presence, that his eyes might behold uprightness. This wish he sees here fulfilled. For that he beholds God's face, presupposes, that God's face is granted to him, that God's eye looks on him and his uprightness. Just as it is said of God, that he hides his countenance, when he withdraws his favour and help, so is he said to grant his countenance, when he shows himself gracious,—comp. Ps. xi. 7, "His countenance beholds the upright." To see God, or God's face, therefore, is nothing else than to enjoy the Divine favour, to experience the friendship of God, to be assured of his love, and thereby obtain deliverance from the hands of our enemies. So unquestionably is the seeing of God used in the prayer of Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 11, "I said, I shall not see the Lord in

the land of the living." Precisely similar also is Ps. xvi. 11, where the Psalmist expects fulness of joy in the presence of the Lord; so that the Lord sees him, and he the Lord. The expression: when I awake—as the improper view, already adopted by Calvin, according to which the person freed from suffering is represented as one awaking, and as the exposition: as often as I awake, every morning, is arbitrary—obliges us to suppose, that our Psalm contains an evening prayer of the Psalmist, or was designed by him to be an evening prayer for the faithful. In the stillness of night, the righteous man on his bed complains to the Lord of his distress, and receives from him inward consolation and the assurance of his help. At rest he now sleeps, certain that on his awaking the Lord will grant him the promised aid. That the custom of prayer at even, springing from the very nature of things, was then also prevalent with the righteous, is evident from Ps. iii. 5, iv. 8, passages which plainly disprove every other explanation of the expression, "when I wake," besides the one just given, as the existence also of the custom of morning prayer distinctly appears from Ps. v. 3.—תְּמוּנָה always signifies *form*. The Psalmist refers here to Numb. xii. 8, where God, marking the confidential relation of Moses to him, says, "with him I speak mouth to mouth, and by sight, not in dark speeches, and *the form of the Lord he beholds*." A like confidential relation to the Lord is here meant, a like visible—namely, through the eye of faith—and felt nearness to him, the form in opposition to *image* and *shadow;* God must receive for the Psalmist flesh and blood, as it were, must be apprehended by him in the most concrete, living manner. The Psalmist consoles himself justly with the thought, that what happened to Moses was a real prophecy for all righteous persons. This hope of the righteous, of satisfying themselves with the form of the Lord, grows out of the same feeling of need, which the appearances of God under a corporeal veil in the time of the fathers served to meet, and which had its highest satisfaction in the Word being made flesh. There is so strong a craving in the human heart for a *near, human* God, that anticipating the incarnation of God, it figuratively transferred to him corporeity, lent to him *form*, that it might love him very intimately, and comfort itself with a place in his heart. The received exposition of this Psalm we cannot deliver better, than in the words of Luther, with whose translation ours agrees, only that he im-

properly connects תמונתך with בהקיץ: "when I awake after thine image." "He sets these words over against what he had said of the ungodly. These strive only after earthly things, are full of children, and place their portion in this life; but for me this life is contemptible, I hasten toward the future, where I shall behold, not in riches, but in righteousness, not these earthly things, but thy face itself. I shall also not be satisfied with children of flesh, but when I awake shall be after thine image." In recent times this exposition has gained much currency by having been espoused even by De Wette. Many thought, that the reference to a blessed immortality must surely be well grounded, which was admitted even by so great a scep tic. Already, however, did Calvin designate this exposition as one not supported by the text, as *subtle*. It has nothing, indeed, on its side. The supposition, that the discourse is here of the striving after the eternal, after eternal blessedness, and that this appears from the contrast mentioned in the preceding verse, in regard to the striving of the ungodly after temporal goods, rests simply and exclusively upon a false exposition of that verse. How it can be maintained, that the seeing of the Lord's face, and being satisfied with his form, must necessarily be understood of the seeing of God in the life to come, is not easily perceived. A corporeal vision even in that life cannot have place; in either case the satisfaction with the *form* of God must be figuratively viewed. The seeing of God in the present, and the seeing of him in the future life, are different only in degree, not in kind. This is rendered manifest by the declaration of our Lord, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," in which the promise, as in all others, is to be referred not less to this life, than to the future one. But what thoroughly refutes this exposition, is the circumstance that, according to it, not merely would there be expressed here a knowledge of eternal life more clear and confident, than we could almost expect to find in a Psalm of David, but especially that the Psalmist would declare his entire resignation in regard to earthly things, which in that case he wholly abandons to the wicked, and directs all his hope to what is heavenly. All the other matter of the Psalm stands in direct opposition to this rationalistic, rather than Christian sort of resignation, for a strong and healthy faith in regard to a future recompense, always rises on the basis of a present recompense. Nay, in ver. 13, we find the Psalmist

calling upon the Lord to deliver his soul from the ungodly by his sword, and in ver. 14, making complaint of the temporal prosperity of the wicked.

PSALM XVIII.

Full of thankfulness, David praises the Lord for having heard his prayer, and delivered him out of great danger, ver. 1—3. He delineates in ver. 4—19, the first part of his dangers and deliverances, which are particularly mentioned in the superscription, by a variety of elevated figures. He affirms, in ver. 20—27, that he had received the Lord's assistance only in consequence of the righteousness of his endeavours, and his devotedness to the Lord. As the deliverance from Saul had been referred back to this ground, so the representation of the second part of the Divine goodness in ver. 28—45, takes from it also its leading point, the assistance which God had already given him against foreign enemies, the opponents of his kingdom, and which he was still to give by means of his promise, both to David personally and to his posterity. The conclusion in ver. 46—50, consists of praise to God for the whole of his wonderful works.

We have, therefore, five parts: the introduction, at the end of which, in ver. 3, the theme is announced, "according to his glory I call upon the Lord, and am delivered from mine enemies;" the conclusion, a twofold representation of the wonderful works of God; in the middle, a representation of the subjective principles on which the Lord imparts his aid, connected alike with what is behind and what is before.

That we have here an artificially composed whole, is obvious from this view of the subject and the train of thought. No traces of a strophe-arrangement are discoverable. We cannot overlook, however, the respect had to the number *three,* pointing to the Mosaic blessing, which in the Psalmist had met with so remarkable a fulfilment. In the superscription, Jehovah is thrice used; and thrice also in the introduction, which consists too of three verses. The names in ver. 2, in which the Psalmist has brought together the entire fulness of the Divine grace, fall into three divisions. The first and the third of these divisions contain three names, whilst that in the middle only one. The

whole number of names is seven, so that the five times occurring number of the blessing goes along with the number of the covenant. As in the introduction we are met by the number three, so also in the beginning of the conclusion. It can hardly be accidental also, that the whole is made up of fifty verses, five decades, in correspondence with the five verses of the conclusion.

The strongest scepticism has not ventured to deny here the Davidic authorship. With the solitary exception of Olshausen, in the "Emendations," it is generally recognised. Ewald urges in support of it, that we have here expressed, with the greatest clearness, David's nature, his mode of reflection, and his deep consciousness, his experiences so peculiar in their kind. That the Psalmist was a king, is quite manifest from ver. 50, as also from ver. 43. The same confidence in the blessing of God, in respect even to his latest posterity, discovers itself in the last words of David, 2 Sam. xxiii. The particular words have quite the Davidic hue. The recurrence in the books of Samuel, is also to be regarded as an external ground, the more so, as all the other songs which these books contain, as of David, are certainly his genuine productions. Hitzig remarks: The author is a warrior, who had often been pressed by the feet of death, by his enemies, with their hostile armies, ver. 29. But Jehovah had delivered him from them all, by reason of his piety, withdrew from them their superiority, and enabled him wholly to subdue them. He not only brought him forth unscathed from domestic wars, and set him upon the throne of Israel, but subjected to him also, far and wide, the heathen nations.

One of the most important indications of the hand of David, is to be found in the relation, to be investigated afterwards, in which ver. 28, ss. stand to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. Another also will be pointed out in the course of our exposition.

In regard to the situation, we are told in the superscription, that David sung this Psalm after that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies. The Psalm is thus designated as not having arisen from some special occasion, but as a general song of praise, for all the grace and the assistance which he had received from God all his life long, as a collection of the thanksgivings which David had uttered from time to time, on particular occasions, a great hallelujah, with which he retired from the theatre of life. In the books of Samuel this

Psalm is expressly connected with the end of David's life, immediately before his "last words," which are presently after given in ch. xxiii. With this design the matter of the Psalm entirely agrees. In it the Psalmist thanks God, not for any single deliverance, but has throughout, before his eyes, a great whole of gracious administrations, an entire life rich with experiences of the loving-kindness of God.

Without foundation, Venema and others would conclude from ver. 20, ss., that this Psalm must have been composed before the adultery with Bathsheba. That deed, though a dreadful sin, yet being one only of infirmity, from the guilt of which David was delivered by a sincere repentance, cannot be regarded as inconsistent with what he here says of himself, if his words are but rightly understood.

In 2 Sam. xxii., this Psalm is repeated with not a few variations. The supposition which is now commonly received, and which has been specially defended by Lengerke[1] and Hitzig, is, that these variations have arisen from carelessness, discovering itself in both forms of the text, though principally in that of Samuel. But the following reasons may be advanced against this view: 1. If such were a correct representation of the origin of these variations, it would follow, that before the collection of the canon, the text of the books of the Old Testament had been very carelessly kept. For it is improbable that this particular Psalm should have been singular in experiencing an unpropitious fate. And in that case, conjectural criticism must have a very large room assigned it. It must proceed on the expectation of finding one, or even more faults, in almost every verse. But even the rashest of our critics do not consider the text to be in such a state, and the more judicious confine conjectural criticism within very narrow limits. 2. In other places, where similar variations are found, where there are texts that come in contact with each other, these variations are uniformly not the result of accident and negligence, but of design. So, for example, in Isa. ch. ii., comp. with Mic. iv., and in Jeremiah, comp. with the numerous passages in the older scriptures, which he has appropriated. 3. The text in each of the forms is of such a nature, that one would never have thought of regarding it as faulty in any particular place, were it not for the comparison with the

[1] Comment. de dupl. Ps. 18, exemplo.

corresponding place making it appear so. If negligence had here played its part, it could not have failed to produce a multitude of passages, in which the fault was discoverable at a moment's glance, and could be shown incontestably to be such. 4. A great number of the variations, nay, the greater part of them, are of such a kind, that they cannot be explained by accident. This circumstance forbids the derivation from accident, even in those cases where it might fairly be allowed to have had place, since it is improbable that the variations should have flowed from a double source. The proof of this will be found in considering the particular variations. 5. It is not difficult to discover certain principles by which the variations in the books of Samuel are governed. That which has had the most powerful influence, is the tendency already found in Ps. liii., as comp. with xiv., to substitute for the simple, plain, and common, the far-fetched, elevated, emphatic, and rare. Besides this, there is also perceptible, the desire to explain what is dark. Such pervading tendencies cannot be explained on the ground of accident.

It has been advanced in support of the view we oppose, that the variation in a number of cases consists only in the change of a single letter, and sometimes, indeed, of such letters as are, either in form or pronunciation, similar to each other, for example, ver. 12, וידא and ויראּ, in ver. 13, חשכת and חשרת, &c. But this appearance is found even there, where the variations have unquestionably arisen from design, and wherever a text is much laboured; the author of the variations was particularly desirous of expressing a different sense, by the greatest possible similarity of form. The fact in question could only have been of moment in the event of the sense being unsuitable in one of the texts. But no trace of this is at all discoverable.

We derive the variations altogether from an after-polishing, accompanied by design; and as both the texts are prefaced by the superscription of David, the design must have been conceived by himself. As to the object of the after-polishing, we do not consider it to have been that of antiquating the earlier form, but for the sake of producing variations, which should be placed alongside of the original and main text. The text in the Psalms appears to us to be this original and main one, partly on the external ground, that this Psalm was given up by David for public use, according to the expression, "to the chief musi-

cian," in the superscription, partly also on the internal ground already noticed, that in a considerable number of variations in the books of Samuel, the design cannot be mistaken, and finally, on this account, that the text in Samuel, even apart from its being justly regarded as a variation of the other, is decidedly inferior to the text of the Psalms.

From this view we derive the advantage of being wholly delivered from a line of procedure, the arbitrary and unbecoming nature of which has sufficiently appeared from experience, according to which men constantly went about to extol the one text at the expense of the other, and called up every thing which might have the effect of representing one of them as deserving of utter rejection.

What has been objected to this view by Lengerke, that such an artificial mode of procedure was not to be expected of David, rests upon that manner of contemplating the Psalms, which considers them as mere natural poetry, and the falseness of which has been sufficiently proved by our previous exposition; nor can it have much weight, at any rate, in a Psalm like the present, which was already designated by Amyrald as *artis poeticae luculentissimum specimen*, and by Hitzig as "an unrivalled production of art and reflection."

To the chief musician, of the servant of the Lord David, who spake to the Lord the words of this song, at the time when the Lord delivered him from the hand of his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. In this superscription, the form of introduction to the song of Moses, in Deut. xxxi. 30, seems to be imitated, "And Moses spoke in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song,"—a supposition which is the more natural, since, in the song itself, the reference to Deut. xxxii. is unquestionable, from which, in particular, David has borrowed the designation of God as the rock, צוּר, and since the introduction to the last words of David in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, rests in like manner upon the introduction of Balaam to his prophecies, in Numb. xxiv. 3. Especially noticeable is the coincidence in the expression, "the words of this song," for which, elsewhere, we find simply, "this song," Ex. xv. 1, &c. Instead of: in the ears of the congregation, we have here: to the Lord, which occurs also in Ex. xv. 1. The expression, "of the servant of the Lord," points to the dignity and importance of the person, which con-

stitutes the ground-work of the deliverances granted to him, and corresponds to the words in the conclusion: who makes great the salvation of his king, as much as my salvation because I am his king. In this dignity of the person, or his importance in respect to the kingdom of God, is founded the ascription to "the chief musician." A song so strongly marked by characteristic traits of the individual as this is could only have been consecrated to the public use of God's service, on the understanding that its author and object represented the whole of the Church, and that the one was blessed in the other. Every pious man, in a general sense, is named the servant of the Lord, so Job, in ch. i. 8; ii. 3, comp. also Ps. xix. 11, 13. Even in this general sense, the designation has respect, not merely to the subjective matter of obedience, but also to the *dignity* of him who is thus denominated; it is an honour to be received by God as among the number of his servants who enjoy the support and protection of their rich and mighty Lord. But the designation is more commonly used in a special sense of those whom God employs for the execution of his purposes, to whom he entrusts the management of his concerns, and whom he fits for the advancement of his glory. David, who is said in the Acts, xiii. 36, to have "served the will (purpose) of God in his generation," was the first, after Moses and Joshua, who in that sense is called the servant of God. He is so, not only here, but also in the superscription of Psalm xxxvi., which is nearly related to ours, and must consequently have proceeded from the author himself, and again in his own words in 2 Sam. vii. Analogous also is the description in the last words of David, "the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob" —a passage which fully justifies the remark of Venema, that the designation is not one merely of *moderation* and *humility*, which are to be recognised in it only in so far as David seeks his honour in what God gave him, not in what he had of himself, but also and pre-eminently of *honour*. David, however, is not acting presumptuously in assuming to himself such an honourable appellation; for the position which he vindicates to himself belonged to him after unquestionable testimonies on the part of God, both in word and deed, and in such cases it is only false humility when one declines to appropriate to himself what God has openly bestowed on him. With בְּיוֹם the entire following period stands in *stat. constr.*, in the day of the Jehovah

delivered him; for: in the day that Jehovah delivered him. To the words: from the hand of all his enemies, and (especially) from the hand of Saul, correspond those in Exodus xviii. 10, "Blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh." The deliverance of David from the hand of Saul was too important not to be specially referred to in the superscription and in the Psalm itself. It was the first of the whole; it was by what he experienced in these necessities that his faith first developed itself in God's fatherly care, and in all his subsequent difficulties David's mind always threw itself back upon those experiences which formed the basis of his inward life. That deliverance was, for him the same as the redemption out of Egypt was for Israel. The danger, besides, was of all the greatest for David. In later times he stood as king against other kings, or his own rebellious subjects; but here as a private man, without power or resources, against the king, who employed all his power to persecute; never afterwards was he so much alone, and immediately thrown upon God. This distinction is impressed upon the Psalm itself. In the section which celebrates the deliverance from the hand of Saul, David is represented, unconditionally, as a sufferer, the hand out of the clouds lays hold of him and pulls him out of great waters. On the other hand, in the section which is taken up with his deliverance from the hand of the other enemies, we behold him throughout active; God delivers him by imparting his blessing to the use of the means which he had himself furnished. He is no more like a "flea," is no more "hunted like a partridge upon the mountains," but as a warrior he places himself in opposition to warriors, runs in the Lord upon troops, and in his God springs over walls."[1] He must first learn to read with larger characters, and then the smaller shall become legible to him. Finally, in no later deliverance did the height to which David was raised form such a contrast to the depth into which he had been sunk, nor in any later catastrophe was there such a contrast, on the part of the enemies, in respect to the depth,

[1] This important distinction was first noticed by Venema, whose remark, however, appears to have been quite overlooked by later writers: "in the former section he had ascribed his deliverance to God alone as a just judge, and had reserved no part to himself; here, however, while he acknowledges God as the source of power and victory, he yet represents himself as an instrument in the hand of God, whereby the enemies were subdued."

as compared with the former elevation: he, raised from tending flocks to be the shepherd of a people—out of the deepest misery to kingly power and glory; Saul, abandoned to despair and an ignominious death, his family thrust down to a low condition. One can only read with surprise the assertion of Lengerke, that the words, "and from the hand of Saul," are a later addition. It is justified as genuine by the division of matter in the song itself, which handles the deliverance from Saul as a separate whole, and invests it with a different complexion from the other deliverances and gracious acts of God.[1]

The introduction occupies ver. 1—3, and in it the Psalmist first declares his tender love to God, and then points to its grounds, as well through the number of epithets applied to God, as in ver. 3, through an open representation of the continuance of the action.

Ver. 1. *And he said: Heartily do I love thee, O Lord, my strength.* Luther: "Our sweet and joyful affection ought to impel us with great force to those to whom we owe it, that we have been delivered from huge evil and misfortune. So says he now: I have a sincere and childish longing toward thee. Therefore he confesses his warmest love that he has a desire after our Lord God, for he has found his kindness to be unspeakable; and from this constraining desire and love it arises that he ascribes to God so many names as here follow." Love to God is already in Deut. x. 12, and in a series of other passages in the Pentateuch, declared to be the sum of the whole law. The manifestations of God's love are designed to lead to him, but this aim is

[1] That the superscription is not, as some have supposed, borrowed from 2 Sam., shows already its formal agreement with the introduction (the threefold number of the names of God) which bespeaks its origin from the Psalm itself, and the same is still more decisively proved by the internal composition of the superscription, in particular by this, "and from the hand of Saul," compared with the matter. The variations in 2 Sam. are just so many intentional changes. First, the words, "to the chief musician," are left out, because here the song comes into consideration only as the personal confession of David. Then this: of the servant of the Lord, is awanting, for no other reason than that in 2 Sam., in the superscription and introduction the entire arrangement connected with the predominance of the number three is abolished, by which these words were rendered necessary, and of the genuineness of which one can scarcely doubt after comparing 2 Sam. vii. 23, 1, and the corresponding, "his king and his anointed," of the conclusion. Finally, instead of מיד, there is used a second time מכף, for conformity sake, while the original מיד was probably employed on purpose to distinguish the deliverance from the hand of Saul more clearly from that out of the hands of the other enemies.

not accomplished in all; many embrace the gifts, and thereby forget the Giver—their hearts are the colder toward God the more eminent his gifts are. Of Israel it is said in Deut. xxxii. 15, "But Israel waxed fat and kicked, he forgot God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." But with David it was through the manifestations of God's love to him that the flame of a corresponding love was kindled, and burned always purer and brighter. רחם, diligere ex intimis visceribus, *to love heartily*, occurs in Kal only here; Piel could not have been used, for that always marks the tender love of the stronger toward the weaker compassion. It appears that David had made the word for himself, because no existing term was sufficient for the expression of his feeling. The word "my strength" (חָזָק, also απαξ λεγ.) is referred by Luther to that strength "with which a man is clothed from above, and by which he is inwardly strengthened and fortified, the firmness which braces weak and delicate minds." This strength, he says, we have not, excepting from God. For when it depends upon ourselves, we are quite weak, in good as well as in bad times, and we melt like wax before the fire. This view might be confirmed by 1 Sam. xxx. 6, "David strengthened himself in the Lord his God." But that "my strength" is at least not exclusively, or even not pre-eminently, to be referred to such internal strengthening, is evident from the following names of God, which all refer to the external aid granted by God, and also from the entire sequel, which runs out upon actual deliverances, and may be said to be embodied in this one word.[1]

[1] This first verse is altogether awanting in 2 Sam. Its internal character bespeaks its genuineness; the judgment of Longerke: *inanis est et frigidus versiculus*, is characteristic only of him who uttered it, not of the declaration itself, and which was the source of two of our finest hymns (this: *Herzlich lieb hab' ich dich, O Herr*, and this: *Ich will dich lieben meine stärke*). The απ. λεγ. רחם is a further proof of its originality; and also the fact that the threefold use of the name Jehovah fails in the introduction, if this verse is held to be of later origin. Finally, as an external ground, the name of King Hezekiah, which, in all probability, was derived from this verse. Against the opinion of Hitzig, that the words were dropt in 2 Sam. from negligence, we would say that such a degree of negligence precisely at the commencement is scarcely to be conceived. But it is quite conclusive that this omission goes hand in hand with the longer addition in ver. 3, which was manifestly designed to supply the place of what was omitted, and which therefore must have been known to the author. If we should attribute to the author of the text in 2 Samuel the design of compressing our text in the additional words: my Saviour, who savest me from violence, we must certainly hold him to have done it very ill. But this was obviously not his design. He only wished to give a variation.

Ver. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God is my stronghold, in whom I trust, my shield and horn of my salvation, my height* (or *strong place*). The first thing to be considered here is, how the words in the middle, אלי צורי אחסה בו, are to be understood. Generally two names of God are found here: my God, my stronghold, in whom I trust. We, however, render: my God is my stronghold, in whom I trust, so that only this: my stronghold, belongs to the series of appellatives applied to God. This view is supported, first, by the consideration that the quite general term: my God, interrupts the series of appellatives, which all bear a special character; in the second place, that by the other view, in place of the number *seven*, so significant, and so much loved by David, and which we the rather expect here, as the number plays so conspicuous a part in the superscription and introduction, the meaningless *eight* would be found. In the third place, אלי does not stand in a like series to the other names of God; for which also speaks the corresponding: my rock, God, upon whom I trust, in 2 Samuel. The author divides the seven names, with which he would praise God, into three parts. The first and the third contain three names; for the intermediate part only one remains. But the mere צורי would have stood too isolated and cold; hence was the אלי prefixed, and the אחסה בו added.—If we must then render: my God is my rock or stronghold, it is certain that the whole verse, precisely as ver. 3, comp. also Ps. xlvi. 1, "God is our refuge and strength," must be spoken *of* God, and that the current exposition, which regards it as a direct address, depending on the words: I love thee, is to be rejected. So long a series of vocatives also would have something formal and cold about it, and would not correspond to the calm restraint which graces the introduction, and which is observed in the two other verses. Our construction was already adopted by the Vulgate.

The designations of God in this verse, as also that in the preceding, of "my strength," contain not only an expression of thankfulness for what is past, but also, at the same time, expression of hope in respect to the future; not the Lord *was*, but the Lord *is* my rock, &c. David's relation to God is a standing one, out of which the future salvation will proceed, just as the one already past has done. That the designations must be understood in this manner, appears first of all from the expression

in next verse: I *am* delivered, not I *was*. Then it is clear also from the body of the Psalm, which refers not merely to the deliverance already received, but also to the future, pointing in the conclusion even to what David was to receive in his posterity.—The two first names, and also the last, are taken from the natural state of Palestine, where the precipitous rocks, surrounded by deep ravines, afford protection to the flying,—comp. "He sets me up upon a rock," in Ps. xxvii. 5, for, he delivers me, Judges vi. 2; 1 Sam. xxiv. 22; 2 Sam. v. 8. The predilection for this figurative description of the Divine protection, which may be recognised, not merely in the three-fold repetition, but also in its forming both the beginning and the end, enclosing all the others, appears to have had its origin in the persecution of Saul. Then David often had to betake to rocks for refuge. He grounded the hope of his security, however, not upon their natural inaccessibility, but his mind rose from the corporeal rock to the spiritual, which he beheld under the form of the corporeal. The mode of contemplation, to which he then became familiarized, would readily suggest such figurative designations of God, his deliverer, as his rock, his fastness, his stronghold. Placed upon this rock, he could say: *non curo te Cæsar*, with infinitely better right than he who, according to Augustine, on Psalm lxx. called from a high natural rock to the emperor as he passed beneath. The third designation, "my deliverer," the only proper one amid others clearly figurative, must serve as an exposition of the two first, pointing to their real substance. In the fourth designation, "my stronghold, in whom I trust," it is not the height and inaccessibility, as in the case of the rock, which comes into view, but the immoveableness, and unchangeable firmness. It points to the immutability of God, his constancy and inviolable faithfulness. The etymology also leads to this sense; צור properly signifies, not rock, but stone. Such decidedly is its import in the first passage, where it is used as a designation of God, Deut. xxxii. 4. There it is manifestly equivalent to אמונה, fidelity, and the meaning of *tutissimum asylum*, does not at all suit. That David borrowed the צור from this passage, which with singular predilection he used in his last words, is evident from ver. 31. With a similar dependance upon that original passage, צור is found in Ps. xcii. 15, "To show that the Lord is upright, my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." The Psalm celebrates God's love and fidelity, אמונה, ver. 2. צור

frequently occurs in close connection with Jehovah, the existing, the unchangeable, (see my Beitr. Th. II. p. 244, ss.) and especially in Isa. xxvi. 4. The name in Gen. xlix. 24, "the stone of Israel," is analogous. This stone is the touchstone for the interpretation of צוּר, showing what property it is in it that comes into consideration. To suppose that this property here is the inaccessible height, would only then be justifiable, if we could take חסה with ב, in the sense of flying to, whereas it always signifies to trust in. With the trusting exactly corresponds unchangeableness and fidelity.—The epithet, "My shield," occurred already in Ps. iii. 3. In Deut. xxxiii. 29, God is named the shield, the help of Israel.—*Horn of deliverance*, is either as much as, delivering horn—so Luther: It signifies an horn of salvation, because it overcomes the enemies, delivers from the enemies, and gives salvation—or the proper word ישׁעי is the explanation of the figurative one קרן: my deliverance-horn, *q. d.* my horn, that is, my deliverance; his power affords me the deliverance, which horns do for beasts. In that case, the image is taken from the beasts, who defend themselves with their horns, and in these possess the seat of their strength. We object to the exposition of others, who take the word in the sense of *height*, that this signification occurs only in one passage, that of Isa. v. 1, and even there it means not mountain-top, but hill, while it is found in a great number of passages in the sense adopted by us, with reference to beasts, whose strength resides in their horns, comp. for ex. Deut. xxxiii. 27; 1 Sam. ii. 10; Job xvi. 15. It is a confirmation also of this view, that the epithet: my high place, of the conclusion, can stand better separate, than, my shield. For it only rounds off, and points back to the commencement. In Deut. xxxiii. 29, there are parallel with the helping shield, the imperious sword, defence and offence.[1]

[1] In 2 Sam. לי is added to מְפַלְטִי, my deliverer, which is neither with Lengerke to be declared original, nor with others to be marked as wholly to be rejected. It bears the character of the unusual, which distinguishes so many of the variations in 2 Samuel. It is found also in Ps. cxliv. 2, a passage grounded upon ours, and cannot therefore be regarded as a corruption of late origin. Of the passages, in which Lengerke has sought to find a similar use of the לי, Ps. xxvii. 2; xxxi. 1, the first is quite inappropriate, and the second uncertain. Instead of this: my God is my rock, there is in 2 Sam.: my rock-God, צוּרִי אֱלֹהַי, a variation, which is shown to be intentional by ver. 47, where the designation: rock-God, again occurs. Such a regularity is incompatible with an accidental origin. The solitariness of

Ver. 3. *As on the glorious one I call upon the Lord, and from mine enemies I am delivered.* The fut. of the verb are to be taken aoristically: as often as I call upon thee, I shall be delivered; so that the sentiment refers at once to the past, the present, and the future. Luther: "He would teach us by this, that there is nothing so bad, so great, so mighty, so long-continued, which may not be overcome by the power of God, if we only put our trust therein. Likewise, that we then pre-eminently had cause to hope in the power of God, that it would then be mighty in us, when many great, strong, and constant evils forcibly press upon us, because it is a property of Divine strength to help the little, the feeble, the dejected, not merely amid the evils of punishment, but also of guilt. For what sort of power were God's, if it could prevail over punishment alone, and not also over sin in us? So full is this passage of consolation; because the state of things it contemplates seems to be wholly against nature, and that one must abandon all hope, when not evil merely, but also great, weighty, and long-continued evil breaks in." The first member is translated by many: I call upon the Lord as one that has been praised, *i. e.* after that I have already praised him. So Luther: I will praise the Lord and call upon him. "This doctrine," says he, "is in tribulation the most ennobling and truly golden. One cannot believe what a powerful assistance such praise of God is in pressing danger. For the moment thou wilt begin to praise God, the evil also will begin to abate, the consoled heart will grow, and then will follow the calling upon God with confidence. There are people who cry to the Lord, and are not heard, ver. 41. Why this? Because they do not praise the Lord, when they cry to him, but go to him with reluctance; they have not represented to themselves how sweet the Lord is, but have looked only upon the bitterness. But no one gets deliverance from evil by simply looking upon his evil, and becoming alarmed at it; he can only do so by overcoming it, hanging upon the Lord, and having respect to his goodness. O doubtless a hard counsel! And a rare

מִשֹּׂנְאָי is in 2 Sam. relieved by the addition מְנוֹסִי, my refuge. Then there is also appended a fuller conclusion: my Redeemer, who redeemest me from violence. It is impossible to account for such an addition by accident. *Our* text maintains here throughout the character of the ground-text; but considered as a variation, that in 2 Samuel is quite unexceptionable. No one would think of bettering it, if we had it alone.

thing truly, in the midst of misfortune to conceive of God as sweet, and worthy of being praised, and when he has removed himself from us, and is incomprehensible, even then to regard him more strongly than our present misfortune, which keeps us from regarding him. Only let every one try it, and endeavour at the praise of God, even though in little heart for it; he will presently experience an enlightenment. For all other consolation profits not, or it profits in a deceitful manner; in other words, is highly injurious." Though the sense, however, is given here with substantial correctness, yet the view taken of מהלל cannot be grammatically justified. To take: praised, for: after that I had praised him, is hard, and everywhere else the word is used in the Psalms as an epithet of God, praised = glorious, Ps. xlviii. 1, xcvi. 4, cxiii. 3, cxlv. 3, comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 25. So must מהלל be understood here also. It marks that property of God which David vividly realizes to himself in calling upon him, points to this, that it is not enough simply to call upon the Lord, comp. ver. 41, but that the full knowledge of his glory must be coupled therewith, which only dwells in the heart that has undoubting faith, distinguishes the prayer of faith from that of the doubter, who prays merely by way of experiment, and dares not hope, that he shall receive any thing, comp. Jas. i. 5. מהלל stands in the accus., comp. Ewald, § 510, *c.*, and the position at the beginning, which has led many astray, is to be explained from the design of giving emphasis to this word.

After the introduction, there follows now, in ver. 4—19, the first part of the representation of the Divine help which David had experienced amid the great necessities and manifold dangers of his life, referring to the period of the persecution under Saul. This is opened in ver. 4 and 5, by a description of the necessity. Then comes, in ver. 6—19, the special development of the truth, in regard to his calling upon the Lord as the glorious one, and being delivered from his enemies.

Ver. 4. *The cords of death compassed me about, and the waters of mischief frightened me.* Ver. 5. *The cords of hell compassed me about, the snares of death surprised me.* The question first of all arises, of what distress in the life of David does he here speak? The proper answer is, that David here brings all the necessities of the Sauline period into one mass. This view is justified by the superscription, which divides all the distresses of

David into two great halves, the Sauline ones, and the others; and also by the relation already pointed out of the two sections, ver. 4—19, and 28—45, to each other, in the former of which David is delivered by God, without his co-operation, while in the latter he is represented as at once the instrument and the object of the Divine deliverance. The supposition that David throws all the distresses of his whole life into one lump merely, is discountenanced by the division of the matter into two parts; and the opinion of De Wette and Lengerke, viz. that the Psalmist speaks of a particular danger and deliverance, (De Wette is uncertain what, Lengerke thinks of David's escape from the treachery of the Ziphites,) is not suited to the occasion and to the general character of the Psalm; and must proceed on the idea, that the Psalmist had unduly filled his mouth, without being able to explain why he should have given such prominence to one particular event at the expense of others. Instead of *cords*, several have: the *pains* of death. חבלי can certainly signify that; but the sense of *cords*, to which the *compassing* is also more suitable, is decided here by the מוקשי parallel to the second חבלי, with which the first must accord in meaning. Death is represented under the image of a hunter, from whom the animal can no longer escape, when the fatal net has been thrown over it. *Belial* is taken here by many expositors in the sense of destruction. The brooks or waters of destruction must be a figurative description of great misfortune, which in a manner overflows a man. But Belial always signifies unprofitableness in a *moral* sense, unworthiness. In this sense does it already occur in Deut. xiii. 13; xv. 19. In that sense it was quite familiarly used, especially in David's time, and is so used in the last words of David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, which are so closely related to this Psalm: unworthiness as *abstr. pr. concr.*, or personified. For the signification of misfortune, destruction, Gesenius produces only, in addition to our passage, Nah. i. 11, where, however, יועץ בליעל is explained by Michaelis: consiliarius Belial, *i. e.* nequam, diabolicus, and according to chap. ii. 1, it must be so rendered. If we follow the only certain meaning of the word, as already the LXX. χείμαῤῥοι ἀνομίας, then by the brooks of unworthiness we can only understand, with Muis and others, the unworthy, (Saul and his company) who overflow as brooks. This view is supported also by what follows. If Belial is explained by destruction, there certainly fails every more definite

mark of distress. One might think, for example, that the Psalmist had been death-sick. But that is against the conclusion in ver. 17, and 18, where it is clearly expressed, that the troubles proceeded from enemies. In this conclusion there is, farther, as good as an express comment on the brooks of Belial. In ver. 17, we find parallel with the preceding words, "he drew me out of many waters," which refers back to the brooks of Belial, "he delivered me from my strong enemy, and from my haters, for they were too strong for me." Also in Ps. cxliv. 7, which has reference to this one, "Deliver me out of many waters, out of the hand of strange children," the waters are not the image of misfortune, but of its cause, the enemies. The fut. יבעתוני is to be explained from the lively realization of presence. קדם is to surprise, comp. on Ps. xvii. 13.[1]

Ver. 6. *In my distress I call upon the Lord, and cry to my God, he hears out of his temple my voice, and my cry comes before him, in his ear.* Just as before the distresses had been all united into one great distress, as is also done again at the commencement of this verse, so here and in the subsequent context,

[1] In 2 Sam. we have first at the beginning of ver. 5 כי added. This addition bears the character of an explanation. The כי marks precisely the relation in which the just begun section stands to the preceding. Luther: "In what precedes he had said and taught, that we must call upon the name of the Lord with praise and love, if we would be delivered from the hand of our enemies; and now farther he relates, that he had done this, and relates his own history as an example of the doctrine which he had taught." Then, instead of חבלי מות, the cords of death, stands, משברי מות, the waves of death. Thereby the first member is made more conformable to the second, and the repetition is shunned. But we are not to conclude from this, that משברי is the original. If it had been so, certainly no one would have thought of substituting חבלי for it. By the reading חבלי the two verses are only made regular. If Belial denotes mischief, then there is the less reason for wishing any thing exactly corresponding to נחלי, the brooks. The repetition of נחלי has an analogy in ver. 12, and 13. The thought regarding the *cords* has so peculiar an attraction for the Psalmist, that he unwillingly, as it were, returns to it. Bound, entangled by death, a helpless victim of it, this is the most suitable description of his case, and to this he returns again after that he has, by the way, indicated another image, and by such indication has pointed to the source of his deadly distress. From all which it is clear, that משברי has only the import of a good variation. The antiquity of the חבלי is also secured by Ps. cxvi. 3. Finally, for סבבוני the fuller and more sonorous poetic form, there is in 2 Sam. the common סַבֻּנִי. The two readings taken together correspond to גם סבבני סבני in Ps. cxviii. 11. The סבני in 2 Sam. serves the purpose of pointing to the emphasis that is in the סבבוני here.

the manifold divine hearings and helps are united into a single grand hearing and help. The futures of the verb are again to be explained from the lively realization of presence. Faith knows no past and no future; what God has done and will do, is present to it. Stier would take צַד as the third person pret. But as it unquestionably occurs in Job xv. 24, as a noun in the sense of distress, we have no occasion to prefer here the more strained exposition: in the distress to me, for, in this my distress. שׁוע, stronger than קרא, denotes the cry for help, which is uttered by him who is in the greatest danger and extremity. On the expression "my God," Calvin remarks: "calling God *his* God, he distinguishes himself from those gross despisers of God and hypocrites, who indeed confusedly invocate a heavenly power, when impelled by hard necessity; but neither with a pure heart, nor as on terms of intimacy draw near to God, of whose fatherly grace they know nothing." By the temple of God is here indicated his dwelling-place in the heavens, not for the reason adduced by Theodoret, that the earthly temple was then still unbuilt—for הֵיכָל is used, as was formerly noticed, also of the tabernacle, and it was only from this being named the dwelling of God, that heaven was also named so—but because by this exposition we obtain a finer contrast: the servant low down in the earth cries, and the Lord hears high up in the heavens; nay, the more highly he is enthroned, the better does he hear, the more easily does he help; because the following context represents, how God comes down from heaven, in order to help his servant; and lastly, also, because of the parallel passage in Ps. xi. 4, "the Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven."[1] —Berleb. Bible: "has thy God now heard

[1] In 2 Sam. there is here אקרא instead of אשׁוע. This throws the emphasis upon the אֱלֹהַי, while the import of this does not come out so decidedly with our reading, which, by the ascending: I cry, rather draws attention to the singular intensity of affection and the greatness of the distress. That it is well adapted for thus bringing distinctly out the "my God," fixing the regard solely on that by employing a similar verb, is clear as day. From this ground, that Jehovah was David's God, springs the confidence of his prayer, and the whole result indeed given in the sequel. But that אשׁוע is the original reading, is manifest from יִשְׁעָתִי, by which it is again resumed. The לפניו תבוא is awanting in 2 Sam. Our reading has the advantage of sensible representation, we see how the prayer with winged speed travels the long way from earth to heaven, comes before God's throne, and enters into his ear. The reading in 2 Samuel, on the other hand, has

thee, O thou oppressed king, then let us know how it behoves us to run to the same quarter, and with thy cry and prayer for redemption."

Ver. 7. *Then the earth shakes and trembles, and the foundations of the mountains move and shake, because he is wroth.* The Psalmist's cry for help has penetrated from the lowest depth to the most exalted height. He had, in his God, who took hold of him, shown indignation against those who oppressed him; and, before the wrath of the Almighty, the earth heaves in frightful anticipation of the things which are soon to come to pass. The foundations of the mountains, for, their lowest base.[1]

Ver. 8. *Smoke goes up in his nose, and fire out of his mouth devours, coals burn from it.* In the whole verse there is a farther expansion of the חרה לו, prop. it inflames him, with which the preceding verse had closed, (Michaelis rightly: *ascendit enim,*) and so the Divine wrath is represented under the image of a fire, just as, in Deut. xxxii. 22, xxix. 20, "Then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man," Ps. lxxiv. 1. With the thunder-storm, smoke, and fire, and coals, have primarily nothing to do here; this is here only prepared. The nose is named, because it is commonly considered the seat of anger, the mouth because it consumes. That אף signifies nose, (LXX.: ἀνέζη καπνὸς ἐν ὀργῇ αὐτοῦ, Vulgate: *in via ejus,* so also Stier,) is clear from the juxtaposition with *mouth;* and that מפיו is to be rendered by: out of his mouth, is clear from its juxtaposition with *nose.* Quite falsely has the ascension of smoke in the nose been placed in connection with the observation, that furious beasts, such as horses, lions, snort dreadfully, and then Stier finds occasion, in the "unpolished, nay, horrific nature of the image," for adopting his false exposition. Smoke has nothing to do with snorting, it is the inseparable accompaniment only of fire. The relation of the two to each other is dis-

the advantage of impressive brevity. Both readings stand peacefully beside other, and expositors in vain try to bring them into collision.

[1] In 2 Samuel we have, instead of the foundations of the mountains, the foundations of the heavens, מוסדות שמים. Our reading takes into view alone the shaking of the earth, because this shows the directing agency of the Lord, which begins to discover itself here, in wrath. On the other hand, the reading in 2 Samuel, with the view of marking very strongly the frightfulness of the wrath of the Almighty, causes the whole fabric of the universe to move before him. This could only be regarded as unsuitable if, by misunderstanding the whole verse, we should take the discourse to be already here of a thunder-storm.

covered in Ex. xix. 18, "And mount Sinai was altogether on a *smoke*, because the Lord descended on it in *fire*." The nose is appropriated as the fire of the Divine anger, after its smoking quality, simply because, after its burning, consuming quality, it is best connected with the mouth. The *devours* stands purposely without an object, and we must not for this supply *the enemies*. It is the burning power only which comes here into consideration. The whole scene in ver. 7 and 8 still belongs to the heavens. By the coals we are not to understand lightning. This is only the later product, comp. ver. 12, of the fire and wrath-heat here first kindled. The suffix in מִמֶּנּוּ refers to the mouth. Coals burn out of it, is not, *q. d.* burning coals go forth out of it, but, *q. d.* flames of burning coals dash out of it, as out of a burning oven, תַּנּוּר אֵשׁ, Gen. xv.

The second point comes now, the manifestation of the anger, the existence of which had been described in the preceding verses. The wrath which burned in the heavens makes itself felt upon the earth, which had called it forth, and embodied itself in a storm upon the heads of the wicked, whose destruction carries along with it the deliverance of the servant of the Lord.

Ver. 9. *He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet.* He, God, as burning fire. The heavens appear to let itself down in the storm. Luther: "When there is a clear heaven the clouds are high; but when a storm comes one feels as if it pushed against the roof." There seems to be some allusion to this here. However, it is justly remarked by Stier, that this in itself: he bowed, fitly accords also as a preparation for the strong expression: he came down, with allusion to Isa. lxiii. 19. It is a proof of the living nature of faith when, in times of judgment and help, one not merely sees the working of a God far-removed, but his own self as in bodily manifestation. What is to be understood by the *darkness* we may best learn from Ex. xix. 16, "And there were thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount," and Deut. v. 22, "All these words spake the Lord unto all your assembly in the Mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness," הָעֲרָפֶל. The Lord approaches, marching upon the dark thunder-clouds. These are, to his enemies, an indication of his anger, and a proclamation of his judgment. Michaelis: "That the wicked might not perceive his serene

countenance, but only the terrible signs of his severe anger, and of his punishment."

Ver. 10. *He rode upon the cherub and did fly, and he flew upon the wings of the wind.* "The cherub," remarks Baehr, *Symbolik, Th.* i. p. 341, who, of recent authors, has given the most correct and profound investigation of the nature of the cherub, and with which my remarks on Egypt, and the Books of Moses, p. 154, ss. are to be compared, serving to supplement his,—"The cherub is such a being as, standing upon the highest stage of the creaturely life, and combining in itself the most perfect kinds of creaturely life, is the most complete manifestation of God, and of the Divine life. It is an image of the creature in its highest form, an ideal creature. The powers of life, which are divided amongst the creatures that occupy the highest place in the visible creation, are in it combined and individualized." That the Lord here was borne upon the cherub must signify that he was coming in the whole fulness of his divine majesty and glory. In the passage, Psalm civ. 3, which has respect to the one before us, the clouds are substituted for the cherub: Who makes the clouds his chariot. That the appearance of the Lord must not be measured by earthly things, that he comes in the majesty of the Lord of the whole creation, not in human weakness, to this also the second member refers: he flew upon the wings of the wind.[1]

Ver. 11. *He makes darkness for his covering, round about him in his tent, dark waters, thick clouds.* This verse is related to the last words of ver. 9, precisely as ver. 8 is to the last words of ver. 7. It gives a further expansion to the words: darkness was under his feet, for the purpose of introducing, at ver. 12, the description of the lightning, thunder, and hail, which broke forth from these dark tempest-clouds. The Abbrev. fut. יָשֶׁת stands poetically in the sense of the common one. Thunder-clouds are named, just as here, the tent of God, Job xxxvi. 29, comp. also Ps. xcvii. 2, "clouds and darkness are round about him." Calvin: "God covers the heavens with darkness, that he

[1] For וַיֵּרָא, he flew, hovered, there is, in 2 Sam. וַיֵּרָא, and he appeared, the *appearing* of God, in contrast with his concealment in the heavens. Quite fruitless are the efforts made to represent this reading as unsuitable; it offers rather a pleasant variation. As דָּאָה frequently occurs, Deut. xxviii. 49, Jer. xlviii. 40, xlix. 22, the reading cannot be explained with Hitzig from the offence which was taken against the rafer form.

may, in a manner, prevent men from beholding him, as when a king, displeased with his people, withdraws and hides himself." To "dark waters," and "thick clouds," we must supply: he makes for his tent. Dark waters are a designation of thunder-clouds. עבי שחקים, prop. clouds of clouds, *i. q.* the most dense clouds, such as are not scattered, but form one entire cloud. שחקים denotes clouds more as a whole, compacted together, hence it never occurs in the singular, as עב, and stands for the clouds of the entire heaven. There is a corresponding phrase in Ex. xix. 9, עב הענן, thick clouds. Gesenius improperly takes עב, in both places, in the sense of darkness.[1]

Ver. 12. *From the brightness before him his clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire.* The storm of the divine anger discharges itself. Amid frightful thunder, ver. 13, and from the sea of fire, with which the Lord in his indignation is encompassed, comp. ver. 8, there shoot forth lightnings, dividing the clouds, and hailstones pour down, the weapons with which the Lord fights against his own and his servant's enemies, as heretofore against the Egyptians, Ex. ix. 24, comp. Ps. lxxxviii. 47, 48, and the Canaanites at Bethoron, Jos. x. 11. The deep floods under which the Psalmist lies buried, disperse themselves under God's almighty hand, until the earth is laid open in its inmost recesses, even to the chambers of the dead, and God's hand reaching into the deep abyss, the yawning jaws of hell, lays hold of his servant. The first member was quite correctly expounded by Luther: "It is a description of lightning. When he pleases, he rends the clouds asunder, and darts forth a flash, such as the clouds cannot restrain; it breaks through just as if there were no clouds there. As we see that the whole heaven, as it were, opens when there is lightning." In the second member, the verb cannot be supplied from the first—עבר does not suit. "Hailstones and coals of fire" stands rather as an exclamation, referring to the frightful nature of the unexpected manifestation. Lengerke, whom De Wette follows, expounds: From the brightness before him went forth his clouds, hailstones,

[1] In 2 Sam. סתרו is awanting, and for סכתו stands סְכּוֹת. An intentional abbreviation. For חשכת stands the ἅπαξ. λεγ. חַשְׂרַת, according to the Arabic, *gathering*. The rare and select חשרת is poetical in its form; the חשכת, water-darkness, for dark rain-clouds, is the same in its import.

and coals of fire, the latter being taken as explanatory; but עבר does not mean to go forth, and the clouds, which can never be identified with lightning and hail, do not proceed from the brightness, but cover it.[1]

Ver. 13. *And the Lord thundered in the heaven, and the highest gave his voice, hailstones and coals of fire.* In Ex. ix. 23, it is said, "The Lord gave voices and hail, and the fire ran upon the earth." The comparison with this ground-passage shows, that the hailstones, &c., are still dependent upon יתן, and, at the same time, confutes those who, following the LXX., would set aside "the hailstones and coals of fire" as spurious, and brought forward from the preceding verse. The repetition is the more in its place, as the coals of fire, or the lightning and the hail, are the very things by which the enemies of the Psalmist were annihilated,—the rest were but the circumstantials which rendered the annihilation scene more frightful.[2]

Ver. 15. *And he sent out his arrows and scattered them, much lightning and discomfited them.* The Lord is represented under the image of a warrior who comes to the help of David. The arrows which he sends upon them, are the lightnings and the hail. The former are named in the second member as the most destructive weapons. The suff. here also require us to under-

[1] In 2 Samuel it runs merely: out of the brightness before him בערו נחלי אש, coals of fire burned. It is there more distinctly brought out, that these coals of fire are the effect of the brightness. The variation cannot be accounted for by accident, it is too great, and there are also analog. var. in the superscription and ver. 6.

[2] In 2 Samuel, instead of: in the heaven, there is: from the heaven, מן. Both are equally good. Hitzig maintains, that משמים is to be rejected, especially since, ver. 9, Jehovah is no longer in the heaven. But the Lord is *perpetually* there, even when he comes down God is still said to be in heaven. Comp. Gen. xi. 7, where the Lord, after he had already come down, ver. 6, says, "Go to, we will go down," &c.; Gen. xviii. 21, where the Lord says, at the time he was walking upon the earth, "I will go down;" and John iii. 13, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of Man that is in heaven," where the Son of God is said to have been in heaven at the very time of his sojourning on earth. In 2 Samuel there is also awanting the words: hailstones and coals of fire. The hail, therefore, altogether fails in 2 Samuel. The destruction of the enemies is accomplished merely by lightning. This constancy argues against those who would derive the variations from accident. So also the fact, that the recension in 2 Samuel remains uniform in its predilection for abbreviations. The text in Ps. xviii. is proved to be the original by its closer approximation to the original passage in Ex. ix.

stand by the brooks of Belial, in ver. 4, the enemies. For no other designation of them had been given before. רָב, the pausal-form for רַב, is either an adverb, *enough*, comp. Gen. xlv. 28, Ex. ix. 28, Numb. xvi. 3, 7, Deut. i. 6, or we may also render, so that there is much of them, comp. בר, coll., multum, for multi, Ex. xix. 21, 1 Sam. xiv. 6, Numb. xxvi. 54. The latter exposition, according to which a comma is to be supplied before רב, *quorum multum erat*, is the simplest. There is a corresponding expression: from my enemy, strong, in ver. 17. It requires a great predilection for strained expositions to drag hither the verb רבב, to shoot arrows, which occurs only in Gen. xlix. 23: he shoots out lightnings. On the ויהמם, and he discomfited, confounded them, Ex. xiv. 24 is to be comp.: "And God troubled (confounded) וידהם, the host of the Egyptians," the more so, as the confounding there also was by lightnings. Further, Ex. xxiii. 27, "I will confound all thine enemies, against whom thou shalt come, and give all thine enemies against thee to the neck," which passage the Psalmist also, in ver. 40, considers as a prophecy, that had now met with its fulfilment.[1]

Ver. 15. *Then were seen the brooks of waters, and discovered the foundations of the earth, before thy rebuke, O Lord, before the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.* The signification of *channel* is quite uncertain in regard to אפיק; in Isa. viii. 7, "And he (Euphrates) goes over all his brooks," *i. e.* overflows all his canals, the common signification is perfectly suitable, as also in Ez. xxxii. 6, comp. xxxi. 12. The מים here is against that signification. The brooks are in a manner invisible, so long as their waters are not divided, and not discovered even to their lowest bottom, in which the Psalmist lies buried. The becoming visible of their lowest depths, refers to the brooks of mischief, in which the Psalmist, according to ver. 4, lay sunk, comp. Ps. cxliv. 6, "Deliver me out of many waters, out of the hand of strange children;" on the other hand, the laying open of the

[1] In 2 Samuel, for his arrows, there is simply וַחִצִּים; for lightnings much, the simple בָּרָק; for, he discomfited them, merely, he discomfited. All these variations have sprung from the disposition to impart an elevated character, by abbreviating the discourse. The author of Ps. cxliv. had in ver. 6, at once the ברק in 2 Samuel, and the חציו of our Psalm in his eye.

inmost parts of the earth to the cords of sheol, with which he was bound, ver. 5. In the preceding verse, it was the vanquishing of the enemies here, and in the following verses, it is the deliverance of the Psalmist from their hands, and from the misery which they had prepared for him. The nose here also is employed as the seat of anger.[1]

Ver. 16. *He sends from above, takes me, draws me out of many waters.* יִשְׁלַח stands absolutely in Ps. lvii. 3, as here. In Ps. cxliv. 7, the object, his hand, left out here, as being sufficiently indicated by the words, "he took me," is expressly given. That the many waters are an image of the enemies, is evident from the explanation in ver. 17. That there is a reference to Ex. ii. 10, "And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water," that David marks himself as the second Moses, is clear, especially from the use of מָשָׁה, which occurs nowhere else but here, and in that original passage. Luther already called attention to this reference. It is the more important, as Moses was a type of the Israelitish people, the waters an image of hostile oppression, in consequence of which Moses was exposed, so that the transaction was a prophecy constantly realizing itself anew under similar circumstances.

Ver. 17. *He delivers me from my enemy, strong, and from my haters, because they are too powerful.* The discourse, as Ewald remarks, passes on more quietly to a simpler representation, after the exhaustion of the great image. That the enemy is to be understood, not an individual, but an ideal person, who through the individual Saul was only imperfectly represented, appears from the parallel: my haters. The *strong* properly forms an entire period, *i. q.* who was strong. This also appears from the corresponding: because they are too powerful, which proceeds on the supposition, that our weakness necessitates the Lord to employ his almightiness in our behalf.

Ver. 18. *They surprised me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay.* The words: in the day of my calamity

[1] Instead of מִיָּם, we have in 2 Sam. יָם. In 2 Sam. the enemies appear under the stronger image of sea-brooks. Then instead of מִגְעַרְתֶּךָ, בְּנַעֲרַת and for אַפֶּךָ, אַפּוֹ. The address to Jehovah is laid aside, in accordance with the preceding and subsequent context, where Jehovah is spoken of in the third person. The reading in 2 Samuel has the advantage of uniformity, the other of liveliness.

—as Amalek surprised Israel on the way, "when he was faint and weary," Deut. xxv. 18,—derives light from the facts, such as are recorded in 1 Sam. xxiv., where David, helplessly environed, and feeling like a dead dog or a flea, ver. 15, is pursued by Saul with three thousand men, and retires into the back part of the cave, in the mouth of which Saul took up his abode.[1]

Ver. 19. *And he brought me into a large place, he delivered me, for he delighted in me,* the righteous, comp. ver. 20—27, while, on the other hand, mine enemies, by their malice, have drawn on them his wrath.[2]

There follow, in ver. 20—27, as a further expansion of the last words of the verse, the grounds which had moved God to deliver David in so glorious a manner, set forth with the design of showing, that the prophecy contained in this fact should not be appropriated by those to whom it did not belong, and of bringing the church of God to the conviction, *that righteousness is the only path of salvation.* The arrangement of the section is as follows:—The Psalmist first sets forth the thesis, that his salvation was the fruit of his righteousness. Then he goes on to prove this thesis in ver. 21—23, by showing that he actually possessed righteousness. He next repeats the principle, as proved in ver. 24, with the view of connecting therewith a general declaration iu ver. 25—27, followed out the didactive and admonitory design, which he pursues throughout the whole section, and showing how, in the particulars belonging to himself, there was realised a general law, so that every one possessing righteousness is sure of salvation, while none without righteousness can comfort himself regarding it.

Ver. 20. *The Lord rewards me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands he recompenses me.* David points, in order to set aside the least appearance of arbitrariness or partial favour, and to represent what was done toward himself, as grounded on the eternal laws of the Divine

[1] Instead of למשען, there is in 2 Sam. משען. Excellently Schultens: hoc est elegantius, illud vero simplicius. The use of ל in such cases is certainly the common custom.

[2] In 2 Sam. מרחב אֹתִי L וַיֹּצֵא. The אתי brings out the *me* more pointedly quite suitably to the context; here: he brought me into a large place, there: he brought into a large place me. The אתי belongs not merely to prose, but also to poetry, though certainly rarer in it, see Ew., p. 593.

government, to that as existing in himself, which, according to the faithful word of God, as already declared in the law of Moses, in a multitude of passages, but most expressly in Deut. xxviii., forms the indispensable condition of every exercise of Divine help. Amid all the infirmities common to men, they still fall into two great divisions, between which an immense gulf is fixed, the wicked and the righteous, and it is the prayer only of the latter that can be heard. The reproach of self-righteousness, we must not, with Calvin, endeavour to meet by the remark, that David had a peculiar reason here for proclaiming the righteousness of his endeavours, in the manifold calumnies which were circulated against him, whose injurious consequences affected not his person merely, but the whole church and cause of God; nor with Muis by the remark, that David attributes to himself righteousness here, more with respect to his enemies, than in reference to God; nor yet with Geier, that he took into account, not the righteousness of the person, but the righteousness of the cause. The *legitimate* removal of the objection rests upon the three following remarks: 1. Righteousness forms a contrast, not to infirmity, but to wickedness. 2. David owed this only to his faithful and inward adherence to God, who kept his servant from the ungodly, that they might not reign over him. In both respects, this Psalm, as well as Psalm xvii., receives its necessary limitation from Psalm xix., which, not without reason and design, immediately follows. 3. Finally, the ground, on account of which David here so presses his righteousness, is not a bepraising of self, but the design of inspiring others also with zeal for the fulfilment of the law. The reproach of self-righteousness, were it just here, might also be brought against a multitude of assertions in Christian songs. Quite analogous, for ex., in the fine song of Anton Ulrich: *Nun tret' Ich wieder aus der Ruh*, is the stanza: "Thus my heart is refreshed, when I feel myself enclosed by the guardian care of the Highest; still, while assured of this, I must live free from sin, and walk in the way of God. My God will never go my way, unless I go his way."[1]

Ver. 21. *For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and was not*

[1] For כִּצִדְקִי in 2 Samuel כִּצִדְקָתִי. That the difference is not accidental, appears from ver. 25, where the same variation again occurs. But it affects not he essence of the idea: צֶדֶק is, the being righteous, and צְדָקָה, righteousness.

evil against my God. שָׁמַר, to observe, keep, stands opposed to the reckless conduct of the ungodly. This becomes quite clear from the corresponding expression in next verse, "all his judgments were before me," also Psalm xvii. 4. מֵאֱלֹהַי, prop. from my God, so as to turn myself away in vile ingratitude from him who is the guardian of my life. For wickedness, as Luther remarks, is a departing and turning away from God. Calvin: "The word which he employs denotes, not a single transgression, but the revolt, which entirely alienates man from God. But though David, through infirmity of flesh, had sometimes fallen, yet never did he give up the labours of a pious life, or abandon the warfare committed to him."

Ver. 22. *But all his judgments were before me, and his commandments I did not put away from me.* The כִּי corresponds to our *but*. The laying down of the one contrast, ensures the denial expressed in the other. Whoever has all the commands of God before his eyes = observes the ways of God, he cannot be evil from his God.[1]

Ver. 23. *And I was blameless toward him, and kept myself from mine iniquity.* With the first member is to be compared Gen. xvii. 1, Deut. xviii. 13, and the Divine testimony for David in 1 Kings xiv. 8, "my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes;" and xv. 5, "David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." By the עִמּוֹ, prop. *with him*, David, in the opinion of some, opposes himself to the hypocrites, whose care is to have themselves regarded by men as unblameable. But that the expression is as much as *toward him*, comp. 1 Kings xi. 4, "His heart was not upright with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father," appears, 1. From the corresponding לִי in 2 Samuel; and, 2. By a comparison of ver. 25, 26,—grounds which are equally conclusive against the exposition of Venema: adhering to him, remaining with him. By the words: from mine iniquity, *i. q.* from the iniquity into which I might so readily have fallen, which lies so

[1] In 2 Samuel לֹא אָסוּר מִמֶּנָּה, I depart not therefrom. Ven.: rotundior et facilior constructio in Ps. The reading in 2 Samuel is closely related to that in Deut., comp. v. 29; xvii. 11.

near to me, David shows that he is not a spotless saint, but a sinner, who had to defend himself by watchfulness and conflict, that his indwelling corruption might not regain dominion over him, and entangle him in guilt. He who was born in sin, Ps. li. 6, must call sin *his* all his life long, and be continually on his guard against it. Ps. xvii. 4 is to be compared, where David characterised sinful doing, as the doing of man. To suppose, with De Wette and others, that the expression means, that iniquity might not be mine, that I might not contract guilt, is groundless, as the simpler exposition affords so beautiful a sense, and one so nearly allied to other declarations of David. Much significance is cast on the words by the narrative in 1 Sam. xxiv. David's cutting off the skirt of Saul's robe is to be regarded as the first step in the course of death. This is clear from the connection in which it stands with the speeches of David's companions about the killing of Saul, with which the act in question is in immediate juxtaposition, and from ver. 5, which can only be explained on this supposition, "And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt." We see here how near the sin lay to him, but, at the same time, how he kept himself from it. At the first step in the course of sin, he starts back, and expels from his heart, with abhorrence, the evil thoughts that arose in it. Certainly the Psalmist had here, as also in the preceding verses, his conduct toward Saul pre-eminently before his eyes, to whom he said, in 1 Sam. xxvi. 23, 24: "*The Lord render to every man his righteousness*, and his faithfulness; for the Lord delivered thee into my hand to-day, but I would not stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed. And behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation." What he there confidently *hopes* for on the ground of his righteousness, that he here marks as accorded to him on the same ground.[1]

Ver. 24. *Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands before*

[1] In 2 Samuel לִי is used for עִמּוֹ, a valuable explanation, as the false renderings of עִמּוֹ show. Then we find there the forms וַאֲהִיֶה and וַאֲשַׁתְּמְרָה. The form with He occurs in the fut. with v. conv. in the Dav. Psalms, comp. iii. 6; vii. 4.

his eyes. The Psalmist returns, according to the plan already announced, to the principles set forth in the introduction, in order to connect therewith the following general statements.[1]

Ver. 25. *Toward the pious thou art pious, toward the upright thou art upright.* Ver. 26. *Toward the pure thou art pure, and toward the perverse, thou art perverse.* The transition here from the particular to the general, *q. d.*: for so thou dost *always* act, shows why David so pressed the particular, that he had therein a didactic purpose in view, spoke of himself, not from vain self-conceit, but rather self-denyingly,—had in view, not his own honour, but God's honour, and his neighbour's edification. The expression has something peculiar, which vanishes, however, as soon as it is perceived, that the Psalmist here, in order to give the most pointed expression possible to the thought, that God directs his procedure toward men, exactly according to men's procedure toward him, so describes the conduct of God toward the wicked, as it would appear apart from the relation in which they have placed themselves toward him. What considered by itself would be unloving, impure, perverse, that appears to be done by way of reprisals towards the unloving, impure, perverse, as alone worthy of God, as the necessary manifestation of his holiness, the matter in itself considered as perverse being the alone right. But to the sinner, who fails in the sense of sin and its condemnation, the conduct of God, which has been determined by sin, and finds therein its proper justification, appears as really unloving, impure, and perverse. He imagines God to be a hard, envious, and malignant tyrant and despot. Against such an imagination the whole of the 32nd ch. of Deut. is directed. A similar cast of speech prevails in Levit. xxvi. 23, 24, "If ye will walk perversely toward me, then will I also walk perversely toward you." The גְּבַר is the rarer poetical form for גֶּבֶר. The Hithpael of all the four verbs seems to have been first formed by David expressly for the purpose of painting in the most vivid colours the Divine jus talionis.

[1] In 2 Samuel stands here, as in ver. 21, כצדקתי. We find צדקה likewise in 1 Samuel xxvi. 23, in David's mouth. For: according to the cleanness of my hands, there is merely in 2 Samuel: according to my cleanness, כָּבֹרִי. It also would not have been placed there, if the more common כבד ידי had not been used before in ver. 21. It is justified by the נָבָר in ver. 27, to which it forms the transition.

The Hithp. of תמם is found only once elsewhere, in Dan. xii. 10, and of the three other verbs nowhere else.[1]

Ver. 27. *For thou helpest the poor people, and the lofty eyes thou bringest down.* The reason implied in *for* consists only in the further enlargement. עני, which always, and without exception, consequently also here, means *poor*, not humble, meek, receives its more exact determination from the preceding context, (Muis: "whom he had before called holy, innocent, clean, he now names afflicted, intimating that it is almost the condition of the pious in this life to be afflicted with innumerable evils,") and from the contrast, though it involves this in itself, since only the righteous in the full sense are sufferers, comp. the illustration in the introd. to Ps. vi.—עם, people, characterises the עניים as a society, as an exclusive class of men, which stands opposed to another class just as exclusive. The lowering of the lofty eyes denotes the humiliation of the proud, who carry themselves in their superciliousness above all, lift themselves over all, in despite of the Divine law, treading upon their neighbour with their feet. The general sentiment of our text is best exemplified by the relation of David and Saul, which was the particular case on which the general declaration is here raised.[2]

[1] In 2 Samuel instead of גְּבַר stands גִּבּוֹר, which is as little to be rejected, as it is original. גבור means only hero, and the other significations are to be derived from this, according to the pattern in Isa. v. 22, "Woe to the heroes in drinking wine." The expression: a hero, unblameable, denotes either such an one as excels in unblameableness, or better, it points to this, that to the being unblameable, hero-power in general belongs, as much as: with the unpunishable man, who is to be regarded as a hero, who is a hero on the spiritual territory,—comp. in ver. 23: from mine iniquity. Further there are in 2 Samuel the two forms תִּתַּבַּר and תִּתַּמַּל. These forms, of which the last in particular can with difficulty be justified grammatically, are formed on account of goodness and similarity of sound, the first with reference to גָּבַר, the second on account of similarity of sound to תִּתַּבַּר. If one reflects, that the Hithpael of these verbs does not occur elsewhere, that the formation itself was already undertaken in the interest of the context, and that every uncertainty was thereby removed from the existing original text, one shall be inclined to defend these readings from the attacks which some recent critics have brought against them.

[2] In 2 Samuel stands first, *and thou* deliverest, instead of *for thou*. As כי is only an explication, there was no way of avoiding its frequent repetition, as it returns at the beginning of ver. 29 and ver. 30, but by substituting the mere copulative ו, which is important for the exposition of the כי. Instead of simple

We come now to the second great representation of the Divine grace and help, reaching from ver. 28 to ver. 45. This is connected with the preceding by *for*. David had marked his deliverance from the hand of Saul as the consequence of his righteousness, and was then led to rise from the particular to the general, setting forth the principle, that righteousness is always the ground of salvation. Here again he descends from the general to the particular, confirms the general principle from his own experience, and shows how its truth had been manifested, and would still further do so, in the Divine aid, which he had already received in all his distresses, and which the Divine promise made him sure of still farther receiving. In regard to the Divine favour, which David celebrates in this section, a twofold view presents itself. According to the one, the whole representation must refer merely to the past, but according to the other, the past, present, and future must here at once be taken into account: David must be viewed as glorifying the grace, which, besides the deliverance spoken of in the preceding section, from the hand of Saul, he had already in part received, and partly also according to the Divine promise, had still reason to expect, not only in his own person, but also in his posterity. The last view is the only correct one. It is supported, 1. By the uniform use of the future in this representation, marking, according to this view, the continued action, which cannot be explained by the other view. 2. The אֶרְדֹּף, I will pursue, in 2 Sam. ver. 38, which at once determines as erroneous the supposition, that the whole representation has respect only to the past. 3. The express declaration of David at the close of the whole in ver. 50, which alone might suffice, affirming the object of his praise to be the favours which God

עַם there is in 2 Samuel אֶת־עַם. The אֶת draws attention to this, that even without the article the word must have a determinate sense, comp. Ewald, § 524, the article being only left out poetically. The second number runs in 2 Samuel: וְעֵינֶיךָ עַל־רָמִים תַּשְׁפִּיל, and thine eyes are against the high that thou mayest bring them down; comp. Isa. ii. 12, "For the day of the Lord of Hosts is upon every one that is high, רָם, that it is brought low, וְיִשְׁפָּל," also ver. 17. Here again in 2 Samuel, the select. Lengerke and Hitzig explain: thine eyes thou lettest down against pride. But the deviations in 2 Samuel are only variations, having the same radical sense, a circumstance which decidedly contradicts the accidental origin of the differences; then the expression of making low the eyes never occurs as a description of displeasure. Psalm cxiii. 6, to which Lengerke refers, has nothing to do with this, nor also Jer. iii. 12, Job xxxvi. 27, which Hitzig appeals to.

manifests *to David and to his seed for ever*. There was the more propriety in David's uniting the future with the past, as he possessed, in reference to it, a sure word of promise, which rendered the future salvation just as certain as the past. If we take this promise into account, and the deep impression which it had made upon the mind of David, we shall feel it to have been impossible for him to have wholly confined himself in this song of thanksgiving to the past. The joyful confidence regarding the fulfilment of the promises made by the Lord towards David's house, he gives utterance to besides, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, in his last words. Nathan in his address to David in 2 Sam. vii. connects both together, the past salvation and the future, the salvation of the person himself and that of his offspring, comp. ver. 9, "And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name;" ver. 12, "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom.". How deep root this announcement of the future salvation struck into the mind of David, appears from ver. 18, 19, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come," ver. 25, "And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said," ver. 28, 29, "And now," &c. By holding fast the right view in regard to the object of the representation, it follows also, that it unfolds a Messianic element. If it respects David and his seed for evermore, it can find its complete truth only in Christ.

Ver. 28. *For thou makest my lamp clear, the Lord my God makes my darkness light.* The shining of the lamp is an image of prosperity, just as its extinguishment is an image of misfortune, comp. Job xviii. 5, 6, "The light of the wicked shall be put out and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his lamp shall be put upon him," xxi. 17. The Lord had enlightened David's darkness, raised him out of the state of inferiority, contempt, and misery, in which he was found especially in the time of Saul's persecution, to high honour and great prosperity, and the Lord will further also enlighten David's darkness, by causing to shine up-

on him and his seed, amid every season of darkness and distress, the light of his salvation.[1]

Ver. 29. *For in thee have I rushed upon troops, and in my God I spring over walls.* Luther: "In confidence on thee I am terrified at no assault, contend against all kinds of enemies, leap over all walls, and whatever else is opposed to me; that is, I who in myself am weak, shall be invincible in thee, and as Paul boasts in Phil. iv. 13, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me," and in 2 Cor. ii. 14, "God be thanked who always maketh us to triumph in Christ." The בְּ in both cases retains its common signification, *in*. David was not in himself, but in God, from whose fulness he drew power and salvation. The רוּץ to run, is, as verbs of motion, construed with the accus.

Ver. 30. *The God, whose way is perfect, the word of the Lord is purified, he is a buckler to all who trust in him.* The הָאֵל is in appos. with אֱלֹהִי in the preceding verse. The Psalmist describes more exactly what sort of God his God is. Taking it as nomin. absol. the article remains inexplicable. In the second member, there would then be no dependence upon the preceding verse. But with that the whole of our verse stands in the closest connection. What is here said of God, explains and grounds the expressions there, *in thee*, and *in my God;* the God whose way, &c. as much as: for he is a God, &c. very different from the idol-gods, who feed their votaries with wind and ashes; comp. 2 Sam. vii. 22, "For there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee." By the word of the Lord is here specially to be understood his promises. On the *purified* comp. Ps. xii. 6.

Ver. 31. *For who is God save the Lord, and who is a rock besides our God?* The *for* refers to the subject of the whole preceding verse: The way of Jehovah, our God, is blameless, he abides by what he has spoken, supports his own, *for* he is the

[1] In 2 Samuel the verse runs, "For thou art my light, O Lord, and the Lord makes my darkness light." The admissibility of אַתָּה נֵרִי doubted by Hitzig and others, shines out still more clearly than in Psalm xxvii. 1, Job xxix. 3, from 2 Sam. xxi. 17, where David is named the lamp or light of Israel. His people say to him, "Thou shalt no more go out with us to battle, that thou quench not the lamp of Israel." Probably these words occasioned the variation in 2 Samuel. David gives God the glory which they had ascribed to him. If he is Israel's lamp, it can only be by God being his.

only true God, the one ground of salvation. Upon this also, that Jehovah is exclusively God, David grounds his confidence in 2 Sam. vii. For צור, comp. on ver. 2.

Ver. 32. *The God, who girds me with power, and makes my way perfect.* A return is here made to the path which was left in ver. 30 and 31, with a very close allusion, however, to what immediately precedes. The האל in appos. to אלהינו, besides our God, the God, who, &c. That the Lord alone is God and a rock, David confirms by this, that he manifests himself in his dealings as such. To be girded with power, is simply as much as, to be furnished with power. Verbs of *clothing* are frequently used in the sense of *allotting*. As תמים is always used in a *moral* sense, we must not understand by the *way* of the Psalmist that, which he goes, but only that which he is led, his conduct. For this also speaks, ver. 30, where the word is likewise used in a moral sense, and refers to God, and the original passage, Deut. xxxii. 4, "The rock, perfect is his work."[1]

Ver. 33. *Who makes my feet like hinds, and places me upon my heights.* משוה, as also מלמד in the next verse, connects itself with האל: our God, who girds me, who makes me like; who teaches. Like the hinds, that is, as they are in their feet. That hinds, and not stags, are here mentioned, must have a real or a supposed foundation in nature. They must be regarded as the fleeter. For that the word denotes both sexes, is incorrect. In the Egyptian paintings also, the hind is the image of fleetness. Many, as De Wette, conceive, that the discourse here is of speed in flight. But this is against the connection—the making him like hinds, &c. stands in the middle between his being equipped with strength, and instructed for war,—against the parallelism, and against the parallel passages, 2 Sam. ii. 18,

[1] In 2 Samuel, the first member runs הָאֵל מָעוּזִּי חָיִל, the God, who is my strong fortress. Before the חיל a comma is to be supplied, precisely as עז מחסי in Ps. lxxi. 7. We are not to imagine, with Lengerke, a stat. constr. interrupted by a suff. The מעוז occurs precisely as in Psalm xxvii. 1, "The Lord is the fortress of my life," Psalm xxxi. 4. Hitzig objects against this reading its "meaningless generality," but it is not more general than the other, and, as a variation, certainly excellent. The second member is וַיִּתֵּר תָּמִים דַּרְכּוֹ, "and the upright he leads his way." The תור=יתר, which in Proverbs xii. 26, occurs in the sense of *leading*, comp. Umbreit in loc. The suff. in דרכו is, on account of the following רגליו to be referred to the blameless, perfect. The Kri דַּרְכִּי proceeds on a misunderstanding.

"And Asahel was light of foot as one of the gazelles that is in the field, and he *pursued*, &c.," and 1 Chron. xii. 8, where it is said of those, who came out of the tribe of Gad to David, that their look was like that of lions, and their swiftness of foot like the gazelles on the mountains. Something figurative is to be understood *here* in what is said of the fleetness, which becomes quite obvious, when we take it along with the last member, and compare it also with the reflected passage Hab. iii. 19. David points to the quick and unrestrained course of his conquests, just as already in ver. 29, his springing over walls, does not refer simply to David's personal deeds, but to what he did also by his army. In the second member, the heights are the hostile positions, which David in the strength of the Lord surmounts. He names these heights *his* in faith; because he has the Lord for his helper, he considers them all beforehand as his possession, none is insurmountable. That we are not, with De Wette and others to understand by the heights, *places of refuge*, is clear, not only from the context and parallelism, but also from the original passages in Deut. xxxii. 13, "he made him ride upon the high places of the earth," and Deut. xxxiii. 29, "thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places," in which the discourse is not of secure flight, but of resistless victory, as it is also in the passage, Hab. iii. 19, which has respect to our verse, "The Lord is my strength, and he makes my feet like the hind's, and he makes me to walk upon my high places."[1]

Ver. 34. *Who teaches my hands in the war, and a brazen bow is stretched by my arms.* That this verse also has in some measure a figurative character, that the particular comes less as such into consideration, than as tending to individualize and render palpable the ground-idea, the invincible strength, which the Psalmist receives from God, to resist all attacks of the enemies and gain the victory over them, appears from the respect it in part carries to the race. The N. T. parallel passage is 2 Cor. x. 3—5. The "not after the flesh," and "not fleshly" there, are not peculiar to the Apostle, but belong also to David. An external conflict with the enemies of God's kingdom is not in itself fleshly, but can only be so through the feeling in which it is conducted, just as a *spiritual* conflict is not in itself *spiri-*

[1] The רַגְלַיִן, his feet, in 2 Sam., has been occasioned by the discourse concerning the blameless or perfect being in the third person.

tual, but only is so when it is fought with divine weapons, with the power which the Lord imparts. Luther justly finds in this verse the promise, that an "unfailing and invincible power to overcome all adversaries is given to those preachers who have learned of God himself." It is contained here, not merely in so far as what is said of one believer holds good regarding all, but also more directly inasmuch as David speaks here not of himself alone, but of his whole race, which perfects itself in Christ; so that everything he says refers in the highest and fullest sense to Christ and his kingdom and servants. The form נחתה is Pi. from נחת to descend, to make to descend=to constrain, to stretch, bend, because in the stretching the cord is brought down. The fem. of the sing. is to be explained by this, that the arms here are considered as abstr., comp. Ewald, p. 629. Also the sing. of the masc. in 2 Sam. וינחת has no difficulty, as the verb precedes. Brass was often used in antiquity for strengthening arms. The arms of the Egyptians in particular were entirely made of brass. To stretch a bow of brass is a proof of the greatest strength.

Ver. 35. *Thou givest me the shield of thy salvation, and thy right hand holds me up, and thy lowliness makes me great.* The shield of salvation is the shield, which consists in salvation. ענוה does not signify here simply *goodness*, as many expositors suppose. Derived from ענה to be low—in this sense, certainly of outward lowness, the verb occurs in Ps. cxvi. 10, Isa. xxv. 5—it marks first, lowliness, then the meekness and gentleness, which spring out of that. The idea of lowliness prevails in Prov. xv. 33, xxii. 12, the idea of meekness, which, however, is always to be considered as proceeding from humility or lowliness, in Zeph. ii. 3, Ps. xlv. 4. Here the idea of lowliness is the predominant one. This is proved by the contrast with greatness, and the parallel passage 2 Sam. vii. 18, "Who am I, Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" What our Lord says of himself, "Come to me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," may equally be said of Jehovah. He thus manifests himself to the lowly, to men at large, and to those who are poorest among them, comp. Ps. viii., where, after the description of God's infinite majesty, follows, "what is man, that thou thinkest of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him;" and Isa. lxvi. 1, 2, where the Lord, who has heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool, is spoken of as

looking down on the poor and contrite in spirit. But that we may become partakers in the manifestations of this humility and condescension of God, it is necessary that we be, not externally merely, but also internally low, that we *feel* ourselves to be poor and needy. To any others it would be a profanation of his dignity. But the lowly his lowliness makes great. That this qualification was possessed by David, is evident from this, that he derives all that God had done for him, out of his lowliness. Luther remarks: "Who then are we, that we should either design and undertake to defend the truth and overcome the adversaries, or should feel indignant if we do not succeed therein? It proceeds from the Divine meekness (lowliness) and grace, if we are held up and honoured, not from our designing and undertaking; so that the whole glory remains with God."[1]

Ver. 36. *Thou makest space to go under me, and my ancles fail not.* Thou makest large my step, &c. One takes small steps, when many stumbling-blocks and hindrances are in the way.[2]

Ver. 37. *I pursue my enemies and overtake them, and turn not again till I have consumed them.* David's kingdom was, is, and shall be for ever a kingdom of conquest. Any temporal limitation also of this declaration is inadmissible, as David's celebration of Divine grace cannot be narrower than this grace itself, partly already bestowed on him, and partly held in promise, which found its culminating point in Christ. That under Christ the form of conflict and victory is predominantly, although by no means exclusively different, makes no essential distinction; enough, that David also in him conquers and constantly will conquer. Luther: "And this has been, and still is done, in all the victories of God's people, as at the beginning of the contest

[1] In 2 Samuel "and thy right hand holds me up" is awanting. This is done out of the uniform predilection for impressive brevity. For "thy lowliness" the infin. is used עַנְוָתְךָ, thy being lowly,—Hitzig's exposition, thy hearing, gives, according to his own remark, "a very unpleasant and improbable sense"—which is the more peculiar, as in the words: O my Lord Jesus, thy near being, this is more poetical, than: thy nearness.

[2] For תחתי there is in 2 Sam. תַּחְתֵּנִי. The difference cannot be accidental, as the latter is repeated in ver. 40 and 48. Here also in 2 Sam. the text is the more select, 1. Because of the rare singular suf. with תַּחַת, see Ew. p. 504, and, 2, Because of the insertion of נ, ib. p. 506.

the enemies seem to be superior and invincible; but when once the onset is fairly made, so powerful is it that they flee and are slain; and then the church remits not to follow up the victory that has been won, until all the enemies are consumed."[1]

Ver. 38. *I will dash them in pieces, and they cannot rise up again, they fall under my feet.*[2] Ver. 39. *And thou girdest me with strength to the battle, thou bowest mine adversaries under me.* Calvin remarks, that it might seem as if David gave too military an air to the whole representation, as if he gave to his human passions too much space, and forgot the mildness which should shine forth in all believers, from their likeness to their heavenly Father. But the matter becomes quite different, if David is viewed not as a private individual,—as such he shrunk from shedding a single drop of blood,—but in reference to his Divine calling and his Divine office. As king he has his sacred obligations to pursue the stiff-necked and obstinate enemies of God and of his people, with the resistless might, which was given him by God, and to spare only the penitent—just as Christ, his great antitype, while he tenderly calls all to repentance, at the same time shivers with his iron sceptre such as obstinately resist him to the last. He then shows, how every one, even he who is not properly called to fight for the kingdom of God against external enemies, has to apply this representation to his edification and strengthening in the faith: "As the victories of David are common to us, it follows that an insuperable aid is promised to us against all the assaults of the devil, all the snares of sin, and all the temptations of the flesh. While, therefore, Christ obtains

[1] The אֶרְדְּפָה in 2 Samuel, which can only mean, *I will* pursue, could only be rejected, on the erroneous supposition that the whole description referred to the past, and it is valuable as a sort of finger-post for the right understanding. For, "and I overtake them," 2 Samuel has "and I extirpate them." In our Psalm there is a progression in the thought, in 2 Samuel, on the contrary, the parallelism is simply a synonym. That in Ex. xv. 9, Ps. vii. 5, the overtaking is also coupled with the pursuing, is a strong proof in favour of the originality of this form, although it does not in the slightest infer the incorrectness of the other text.

[2] In 2 Samuel there is at the beginning, וְאֲכַלֵּם, Mich. rightly: consumam inquam eos; and instead of: they *could* not stand up, they do not stand up, יְקוּמוּן לֹא. The expression "I extirpate them," indicates that this verse is an extension of the thought: till they are extirpated, in the preceding, and implying that the extirpation was seriously intended. Of an accidental origin we cannot think, as, with the adding, a throwing away goes hand in hand. The words: they stand not up, are to be explained from the predilection for impressive brevity.

his peaceful kingdom only through war, it is matter of certainty to us, that God's hand will be always ready for his support. But we must at the same time learn here, with what arms we must fight according to the will of God, with those alone which he delivers to us."[1]

Ver. 40. *Thou givest me mine enemies in the flight, and my haters I extirpate.* The first member we must either expound: thou hast given them to me so, that they are only necks for me, must turn the back toward me, or in respect to the necks, so that ערף determines more precisely in what respect the enemies of David were delivered up to him. The former exposition is supported by the original passage, Ex. xxiii. 27, "and I will give all thine enemies to thee as necks." The Psalmist recognises, in his own case, the fulfilment of the promise which the Lord here gave to his people.[2]

Ver. 41. *They cry, but there is no helper, to the Lord, but he does not hear them.* The על is to be explained thus, that Jehovah is, as it were, the substratum of the crying, the person upon whom the crying rests, comp. 1 Sam. i. 10, "She prayed, על יהוה," Ewald, p. 531. The words: to the Lord, add the particular to the general, as much as, they cry in vain, even then when their cry is addressed, not to false gods, but to Jehovah, to whom even the heathens in their last extremities knew to turn, Jonah ii. 14, or at least might possibly turn. The reason why even Jehovah would not hear, is, that the particular prayer had not its justification in the general relation toward God, which alone could make it acceptable, that the persons addressing it are without the covenant and the promises, are the enemies of God, who cannot pray to him in true faith, but only by way of venture. The very ground of David's prayer being heard, implies the exclusion of theirs from the privilege.[3]

[1] In 2 Samuel, וַתְּזַרֵנִי, with the omission of א, the rarer, and hence more poetic form.

[2] In 2 Samuel, for נתתה there is the rare form תַּתָּה. The ו is awanting before משנאי, and is placed instead before the last word: my haters, *whom* I extirpate, more poetical and impressive than the simple: my haters, I extirpate them; comp. Isa. vi. 13; ix. 4; Dan. viii. 25.

[3] In 2 Samuel, instead of ישועו, they cry, we have יִשְׁעָו, they look out. The rarer and more select שעה is used precisely thus in Isa. xvii. 7, "In that day shall a man *look* to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the God of Israel." For the על the explanatory אל is substituted.

Ver. 42. *I crushed them, as dust before the wind, as the dirt of the streets I pour them out.* As the dust before the wind is not crushed, but carried away, so that we gain nothing by arbitrarily inserting such words, as scattering, or driving away, yet the meaning must be understood thus: so that they resemble the dust, their crushing proceeds with as little hindrance as the driving of the dust by the wind. The sense is: their crushing is only a sort of pastime to me. Exactly analogous are the comparisons in Job xxxviii. 30, "the waters disappear like a stone," xxx. 14; Zeph. i. 17. The like holds good also of the second member. As the dirt of the street is not poured out but scattered, so the expression: as dirt of the street, can only mean, so that they resemble the dirt of the street, namely, in respect to the contemptuous treatment which they suffer. This is always the point of comparison which is aimed at in such a use of the dirt of the street, Isa. x. 6; Zech. x. 5. In the expression: I pour them out, there is at bottom a second image, that of unclean water, *q. d.*: I have as little respect for them, I use as little ceremony with them as with the offscourings which one treads upon, unclean water which one pours out. In these words also there is praise given to the grace of God, who strengthens the Psalmist so completely to humble the enemies that he can treat them in such a manner.[1]

Ver. 43. *Thou deliverest me from the strivings of the people, thou settest me at the head of the heathen, a people whom I know not serve me.* By the people in the first member is meant here the great multitude of enemies, in opposition to individuals.

[1] In 2 Sam. the comparison stands otherwise, in both members. There we have a fully expressed one, while here it is merely indicated. For: dust before the wind, stands, dust of the earth, because this is the object of crushing. Comp. עפר ארץ in this sense, though denied by Hitzig in Gen. xiii. 16, xxviii. 14; Ex. viii. 12, 13; Isa. xl. 12; Am. ii 7. For: I pour them out, stands אֲדַקֵּם, I make them thin or small, because the dirt of the street is the object, not of pouring out, but throwing away. (Against Hitzig: דקק signifies in Hiph. not to crush, to rub down, but everywhere to make thin, small; also the dirt of the street, or street-filth, is not to be thought of as necessarily fluid.) As this אדקם for אריקם cannot possibly be accidental, we may certainly infer design in the other deviations, which consist only in the substitution of particular letters nearly related to the others in form or in sound. The judgment of that man is not assuredly to be envied who would attempt to explain the whole of the ingenious alterations in both members, by accident. Stamping upon them, is added to, making them small, and, indeed, without connection, agreeably to the whole character of the recension of 2 Samuel.

That the first member refers to the domestic adversaries of David (Saul and Absalom, with their adherents,) is evident, besides the "my people," in 2 Samuel, from the רִיב, which has respect more to contentions than to wars, comp. Ps. xxxv. 1, 1 Sam. xxv. 39. In the whole of the second part too, which chiefly respects the heathen adversaries, the discourse is not of deliverance from them, but of their being conquered and destroyed. On the other hand, when domestic enemies are spoken of, the idea is principally that of deliverance, comp. 16—19. Deliverance from the strivings of his own people is brought into notice here chiefly as a foundation and preparation for the supremacy over the heathen. This comes clearly out in 2 Samuel, in the words: thou *keepest* me for the head of the heathen. The whole context also shows it. Both before and after, and everywhere in the second part, the discourse is of the heathen. That in the ascending clause: a people whom I know not, serves me, the *knowing* is to be taken emphatically, *q. d.* such as I have had no nearer relation to, as, for example, the king of Hamath, 2 Sam. viii. 10, appears from the next verse. As David, according to ver. 50, speaks not of the kindnesses merely, which were shown to himself personally, but of those also which were to be shown to his posterity, various expositors, such as Calvin, have justly remarked that the complete fulfilment of this and the next verse is to be sought in Christ.[1]

Ver. 44. *Who through the hearing of the ear are heard to me; the sons of the stranger feign to me.* De Wette remarks, that "from this point the fut. appears to have the force of the present." But if they have it from this, they must also have it throughout the whole section. For there is nothing to justify us in supposing a change to take place just here. The words are worthy of notice as a naïve expression of an exegetical conscience. The first member is commonly expounded: at the hearing, at the mere report, they obey me. But this exposition

[1] In 2 Samuel stands בַּמִּי, my people, instead of עַם, a deviation of an explanatory character, the more valuable as many expositors, such as Lengerke and De Wette, who disdained his help, have failed. For: thou settest me, there is the more select phrase: thou keepest me, תְּשִׁמְרֵנִי—again, an example of a charge adhering closely in form to the original text, which cannot be explained from accident,—which brings more distinctly into view the connection between the second member and the first. Hitzig: out of this Jehovah delivered him, in order to preserve him for a future leader of peoples.

is altogether inadmissible: שמע in Niph. can only signify to be heard,—not to be made to hear,—and this cannot stand for: obey. In the sense of being heard, the Niphal is also everywhere used. More objectionable still is another exposition: upon what their ear heard, upon the mere word, they obey me. For this takes not only the ישמעו, but also the לשמע אזן, contrary to the common usage. שמע, hearing = what one hears, the heard, stands both with and without אזן specially of that, which one receives through hearsay, through report, comp. for ex. Job xlii. 5, where לשמע אזן in the sense of hearing merely through report, is opposed to *seeing*, uncertain and fluctuating knowledge, to clear and determinate. The variations in 2 Samuel also are against both interpretations. One must either translate as we have done above, or: they, the people who serve me, are heard of me by the hearing of the ear, I know of them merely by report. The paral. is by the latter rendering only apparently lost. For: by the hearing of the ear, &c., is from the connection as much as, shall serve me those, &c. The first of these expositions, however, as it is more congruous to nature, so it is more favoured by the text in 2 Sam. The expression: they feign to me, is as much as, far distant people, of whom I hitherto have known only through hearsay, testify to me their subjection, from fear, in the most humble terms, although they hate me in heart, and would fain shake off my yoke. Such an external and constrained obedience—just on account of its bearing this character, the power which God manifested in behalf of David, is made more conspicuous, for how great must this be, when the fear it awakened overcame the strongest aversion,—is denoted by כחש in the original passage, Deut. xxxiii. 29, "And thine enemies shall feign to thee," to which David here refers, as having met with its fulfilment in him, comp. also Ps. lxvi. 3; lxxxi. 15.[1]

Ver. 45. *The sons of the stranger fade away, and tremble out*

[1] In 2 Samuel: "The sons of the stranger feign to me, who, through the hearing of the ear, are heard of by me." The sense is made clearer by the inversion. By placing: the sons of the stranger in the front, it is signified that what follows, who through the hearing, &c., is a mere description of them. The לִשְׁמוֹעַ, inf. used instead of the less obvious noun, has also the character of an explanation. How necessary this explanatory style is in the variation, appears from the fact that those who have not availed themselves of the key offered by it have quite failed to

of their close places. For the ἅπ. λεγ. חרג—in Chal. חרנא, terror—we have in Mich. vii. 17, רגז, to shake, in a precisely similar connection.[1]

In the closing verses, which now begin, the subject of the whole is recapitulated.

Ver. 46. *Living is the Lord, and praised be my rock, and exalted is my salvation-God.* That the threefold praising of God here has respect to the Mosaic blessing, we remarked before. The living Jehovah can neither be explained, living is, nor living be Jehovah. Recent expositors mostly follow the latter rendering: they conceive that the usual acclamation to the king is here transferred to God. But as the expression: he lives, presupposes the possibility of dying, and is always used in reference to the mortal, such a transference is scarcely to be thought of, the form for the king is a different one, יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ, 1 Sam. x. 24, 2 Sam. xvi. 16, 1 Kings i. 25, 2 Kings xi. 12, and finally, what of itself is enough to decide the matter, the חַי יְהוָה is familiar as a form of oath, and in that use always means: living *is* the Lord. These passages are decisive for the exposition of ours, the only one where the expression occurs not as an oath. The ground derived from the analogy of the following doxologies is without any meaning. The expression: living is the Lord, is also doxology, and so accords with that in 1 Tim. vi. 16, "who alone has immortality." To praise God, means nothing else than to ascribe to him the glorious perfections which he possesses, for we can only give to him what is his own. The *exalted* also is a mere declaration, he is, not let him be, exalted. If it were a wish, then the verb would have been the fut. apoc. The Lord is named *living* in contrast with the dead idols, who can do nothing, leave their own without support, given up to destruction. That David was living, exalted, and blessed, showed that his God

discover the true meaning. But *our* text is shown to be the original and main text by the circumstance that the words: "who through the hearing," &c., are immediately joined to the others: "a people that I know not," the בְּנֵי נֵכָר being moved onwards to the next verse, in which it is again resumed.

[1] In 2 Sam. יַחְגְּרוּ, they *gird* themselves, namely for going forth. Hitzig expounds according to the Syriac: they *limp* out of their close places. But it is quite unjustifiable to take a word of such common use in the Hebrew in a signification so peculiar. The girding for departure, Ex. xii. 11, and especially 2 Kings iv. 29. As a variation, the reading is quite good, but certainly that in our text is the original one.

was also living, exalted, and to be blessed. He is himself the living proof of *his* vitality, exaltedness, and title to be praised.[1]

Ver. 47. *The God, who gives me amends, and constrains the people under me.* This and the following verse stand in close connection with what is expressly represented in ver. 4—19 and ver. 28—45, and point to the ground of the praise of God, ascribed in the preceding verse, the facts, which declare him to be living, exalted, and worthy to be praised. It is as if this verse had begun with a *for*. Revenge is justly sweet to David, because he does not execute it for himself, but God does it through him. Where the individual is the bearer of a right conferred by God, then it were sinful not to seek revenge, not to withstand the alienation of the right, not to strive, that the unjust proceedings of those who have committed them, should return upon their own head, and might not enjoy what they do of evil.[2]

Ver. 48. *Who deliverest me from my enemies, thou also liftest me up from my adversaries, from the man of violence thou deliverest me.* As in the second member there is no positive indication either in the verb or in the noun of an ascent, the אף cannot be used as marking a gradation, but, as very commonly in the Psalms of David, for the purpose of connecting and adding; and the *and* in 2 Sam. approves itself as the right exposition. If we seek for an ascent in the noun, then the קמי puts us in perplexity; if we seek it in the verb, we are again perplexed by the *deliverest* in the third member. The expression: thou liftest me up from my adversaries, is constr. praeg.: *exaltas me, hostibus meis ereptum.* The man of violence is indeed primarily an ideal person, as the strong enemy, in ver. 17, comp. Ps. cxl. 1, 4. Still, the reference to the superscription shows that the Psalmist had Saul specially in view.[3]

[1] In 2 Samuel we have, for my salvation-God, the rock-God of my salvation, *i.e.* the rock-like God, who grants me salvation. Comp. the expression: my rock-God, in ver. 2. The inserted צור is used, like so many other deviations in 2 Samuel, for the purpose of strengthening.

[2] In 2 Samuel for וידבר, with the view of making plain, ומורידי, and brings down. The הדביר in the sense of driving, only elsewhere in Psalm xlvii. 3.

[3] In 2 Samuel stands instead of מפלטי the more select מוציאי, pointing to v. 19. Farther, instead of איש חמס there is the stronger phrase איש חמסים, which also occurs in Psalm cxl. 1, 4.

Ver. 49. *Therefore will I praise thee among the heathen, O Lord, and sing praises to thy name.* The mention of the heathen indicates, that David's experienced mercies were too great, that the praise of them should be confined within the narrow bounds of Palestine. He can only have a proper auditory in the nations of the whole earth. Paul brings forward, in Rom. xv. 9, among Old Testament passages, showing that salvation was appointed also for the heathen, this verse, in connection with the similar passage Deut. xxxii. 43, "rejoice ye heathen, (rejoice) his people," *i. q.* with his people, Ps. cxvii. 1. These passages are quite adapted to prove what they are selected for. If the heathen are interested in that, which Jehovah does by Israel, if they also belong to the auditory in which his great deeds are to be celebrated, then God must be the God, not merely of the Jews, but also of the heathen, and consequently must make himself known as such through the offer of his salvation. Our verse and the similar passages present a decided contrast to the wretched particularism which Paul combats. The variations in 2 Sam. are unimportant.

Ver. 50. *Who gives great salvation to his king, and does good to his anointed, to David and his seed for evermore.* Who gives great, is as much as, *for* he gives great. The pl. ישועות points to the rich fulness of the salvation. The Epexegesis to משיחו is not merely לדוד, but לדוד ולזרעו. There is an evident reference to 2 Sam. vii. 12—16, where it was promised, that God would show favour to the seed of David even to eternity; the חסד, זרע, and עד עולם, all occur there too. By this reference, and by their necessary use as a sort of finger-post for the exposition of ver. 28—45, the words: to David and his seed for evermore, are justified as genuine. Elsewhere too David has interwoven his name in his song and prayer, comp. 2 Sam. vii. 20, 26; xxiii. 1. Similar to our Psalm is Ps. lxxxix., where likewise the favours of the Lord to the seed of David, both past and future, are celebrated; comp. also Ps. xxi. These Psalms are distinguished from those, which may more strictly be called Messianic, Ps. ii. xlv. lxxii. cx., only by this, that in the latter the Messiah *exclusively* is brought into view, while here he is presented to our notice only as a member of the seed of David.

PSALM XIX.

God manifests himself in creation, and his works in the heavens attest his glory, unceasingly, mightily, over the whole earth, especially the most glorious object in them, the sun, which majestically performs his long course, and fills everything with his warmth, ver. 1—6. The law, which has been given by this world-God, possesses all the features which are essential to it as deriving its origin from such a source; it gives to man a sure and unerring direction, how he has to employ his life, and fills his heart with joy, by bringing his painful uncertainty in this respect to an end, ver. 7—10. With internal gratitude the Psalmist acknowledges the enlightenment which he has received from this law, which, as surely as it is the pure expression of the will of the Almighty, so surely does it promise a rich reward to those who keep it. But that he may actually attain to this reward, he stands in need of a double benefit, the grace of forgiveness for the manifold sins of imperfection, which even in the servant of the Lord spring from the corruption of nature, and the grace of preservation from the heinous trangressions, which would cause him to forfeit his place as a servant of God, and therefore he begs, that the Lord, as his true Redeemer, would grant such tokens of kindness to him, ver. 11—14.

According to this representation of the subject, the description of the glory of God in creation, is only an introduction to the praise of the glory of the law, and this again serves the Psalmist only as a ladder to reach his proper aim, the prayer for pardon and for moral preservation.

The relation between ver. 1—6, and 7—10 is, by some of those who recognise the introductory character of the first section, construed thus: God has manifested himself indeed in creation, but he has done so far more gloriously in the law. But if this relation had been marked, the pre-eminence of the law above nature, as a manifestation of God, would have been brought out far more emphatically than is done by the employment of Jehovah in the second part, instead of the general name, God, in the first. If the introduction were intended to raise the higher

by comparison with the lower, in the manner of Deut. iv. 19, 20, the latter must have been marked more decidedly as such. The design of the introduction must rather be only to point out the glory of the lawgiver, to give to Jehovah, the God of Israel, who made known his will through the law, the basis of Godhead, and so, to bring the mind from the very first into the right position toward the law. The thought, that he who gave the law is he whose praise the heavens declare, whose greatness as the Creator is manifested by the sun, must fill the mind with holy reverence before him, and with internal love toward him. The first part, therefore, serves the same design, as elsewhere is done by placing together the names Jehovah Elohim, which is always done as a contrast to the particular representations of Jehovah, with the view of displacing the imagination, that Jehovah was only the God of Israel, (comp. my Beitr. Th. II. p. 311, ss.) the very same view, which led to the use of Jehovah Elohim and Sabaoth in the discourse of David himself, 2 Sam. vii. 22, 25, 26, 27; for there he constantly recurs to the thought, that Jehovah, who had given him so glorious a promise, was no other than that very God, who was Lord of heaven and of earth, in order to strengthen himself in faith on this promise. Especially instructive for the relation of our two sections to each other is ver. 28 there. "And now, O Lord Jehovah, thou art God, and thy words are truth." There, as here, the consideration of Jehovah's being God, the conviction of the truth and infinite preciousness of the Divine word, serves to admonish us how, if we would obtain the right blessing from reading the holy word, we must keep vividly before our eye, that he who speaks in it is no other than the Creator of heaven and of earth.

The plan of the Psalm is quite mistaken by those who, as still lately Hitzig and Maurer, make it fall into two closely connected halves, the first containing the praise of God from nature, the second from the law, or generally revelation. On the other hand, the practical conclusion of the Psalm, which refers only to the law, is decisive against this. If the first part possessed an independent signification, the manifestation of God in creation must necessarily also have been placed in an ethical light toward man, for the purpose of declaring what feelings it should awaken in him, what obligations it lays upon him. What is the only aim, the proper kernel of the Psalm, comes out so pointedly in

the concluding verses, that it is inconceivable how it could be overlooked.

This misapprehension as to the plan of the Psalm has given rise also to the hypothesis of De Wette, Koester and others, that it has been made up of two originally distinct songs; against which Hitzig remarks, that ver. 6 forms no proper conclusion, that the discourse proceeds to its greatest height towards the end, that the conclusion is for the second half alone too extended and solemn, and shortly and ably sets aside the only apparent ground almost for this hypothesis, as follows: "The more quiet tone, the more equal movement in the second part is to be explained from the less spirited object, not belonging to the territory of vision." What is besides advanced by De Wette, that the poet, who began with such an elevated contemplation of nature, could scarcely close with the feelings of a bruised heart, falls at once to the ground, since the conclusion is just as full of joy as the beginning—what can be more joyful than for one to be able to name the Lord his rock and his redeemer!—and since even in the middle there is no trace of a bruised heart, the mind rising under a sense of human weakness, easily and without a struggle, to the blessed hope of Divine forgiveness, and sustaining grace.

It is also matter of surprise that Ewald could not rise above the common division, as he still feels himself obliged to remark, that the two halves are not in themselves complete; the first not, because if viewed as independent, the song would be without all doctrine and application, without any intimation as to how man should praise God, or imbibe that praise of the heavens, and so should appear as a torso, unsatisfactory and unanimating; the second not; for ver. 7 is too cold as a commencement. We might still farther add, that the commencement would be an awkward one, the Psalmist would stumble at the gate into the house. So that the strange supposition must be resorted to, that the conclusion of the first half has been lost, and that a later poet has added to the fragment a new, unsuitable conclusion.

For the integrity of the Psalm there is also to be mentioned the evident intention through the whole in the use of the names of God. In the first part, which speaks of the general manifestation of God in nature, the general name of God is employed,

El; immediately with the change in the manifestation begins the name Jehovah, the occurrence of which just seven times itself shows, how much of design there is in the use made of the names of God. As a farther proof of integrity, is to be noticed the peculiar prominence given to the sun in the first part, and indeed particularly toward the close. Corresponding to it in the second part the law is held up as the spiritual sun, comp., the predicates, clear, pure, heart-quickening, eye-enlightening, also זָהִר in ver. 11. Finally in Ps. viii., as here, the heaven appears as the proclaimer of the praise of God, and there also this representation has no independent meaning, but serves merely as a stepping-stone to the second part.

Of the Davidic authorship there can be no doubt, after the superscription, and the respect, already noticed, which it bears to Ps. viii., and 2 Sam. vii. An indication has been sought, though without foundation, of the Psalmist's relations in ver. 13. The denomination, "thy servant," must be appropriated by every one, who recognises in the Psalm the expression of his own feelings. The psalmist speaks from the soul of every pious man, and we have before us a truly popular song.

Ver. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows forth his handiwork.* Calvin: "Nothing certainly is so dark and despicable in the smallest corners of the earth, as that we might not there discover some traces of Divine power and wisdom, but because a more expressive image is imprinted in the heavens, David made choice of these especially, as their light guides us to the observation of the whole world. For if any one has known God from the contemplation of the heavens, he cannot fail also to recognise and admire his wisdom in the smallest plants." In the east, the consideration of the heavens is peculiarly adapted to give a deep impression of the greatness of God as Creator. When C. Niebuhr, many years after his return from the east, lay in bed under the blindness and exhaustion of old age, "the glittering splendour of the nocturnal Asiatic sky, on which he had so often gazed, imaged itself to his mind in the hours of stillness, or its lofty vault and azure by day, and in this he found his sweetest enjoyment." The heavens and the firmament are personified, and the announcement of the glory of the Creator is attributed to them, which is apprehended in them by the pious mind. This personification is chosen with reference

to the actual manifestation of God in the words contained in ver. 7—10. Instead of "the glory of God," Paul, in the passage, Rom. i. 20, which alludes to this here, has "eternal power and Godhead." That the firmament is identical with the heavens, appears from Gen. i. 8. It is the vault of heaven, in which are sun, moon, and stars, Gen. i. 14, ss., the shining witnesses of God's glory, in reference to which he bears the name of Sabaoth, God of hosts. The word, which occurs only once again in the Psalms, cl. 1, points back to the history of creation. Many, as De Wette, render הגיד by praising, extolling, and the expression מעשה ידיו: what he can make and do by means of his almightiness and wisdom. Both, however, are inadmissible The former can only signify *announce, show forth*, as both the usage and the paral. with ספר, show, and מעשה ידיו, only: the work of his hands. The firmament, while, from the nature of things it is only an announcement by matter of fact, of what God has made, testifies, at the same time, (since doing proceeds from being,) of the Creator, what he is, concerning his glory. It was justly remarked by Venema, that in substance, the two members are to be regarded as running into one another, *q. d.*: the heavens make known the work of God's hands, and thereby his glory; or, the heavens as the work of God's hands, make known his glory. So also, already Paul in Rom. i. 20, "For the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."

Ver. 2. *Day unto day pours forth speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.* The naked thought is this, that the heavens, with their starry host, unceasingly testify of God's glory, since, by day, the sun constantly shines, and by night, the moon and stars. Hence the Psalmist expresses the thought so, that he makes every day and every night under-heralds of God's glory, communicating to their successors what they had learned from the heavens and from the firmament. The *speech* of the day can only be the echo of the speech of the heavens, and the knowledge of God's glory (דעת signifies only knowing, perception, insight, never telling) which the night shows, is only such as has been furnished it by the heavens. This is evident from the reference of the אמר to the מספרים, the resumption of אמר in ver. 3, and the suffixes in ver. 4, which unquestionably

refer back to the heavens, and which exclude all interruption of the reference to the heavens. The connection is destroyed by the remark of Stier: "We are to understand not merely what we see by day and night in the heavens, but, as the expression naturally imports, (that is, if viewed without respect to the connection) the whole that is done by day and night under the heavens." Here, as also in Ps. viii. the discourse is merely of the testimony of the heavens. דביע, to cause to sputter forth, marks the rich fulness with which the testimony on all hands breaks forth.

Ver. 3. *There is not speech and there are not words, their voice is not heard.* נשמע is pointed as partic.: is not one heard, their voice is not among the number of the heard. The suff. in קולם refers to the heavens and the firmament, and these are the very things of which speech and words are denied. The author points to the powerfulness of the testimony which the heavens deliver of God's glory. How strongly must the traces of God's glory be impressed upon them, when they need no speech to make him known as their Creator, when they need only to be dumb-heralds of the Divine greatness and still they declare and show forth. It is commonly supposed by those who follow this exposition, that the sense is first completed by the addition of the following verse: they are indeed speechless, yet still their preaching is understood throughout the whole earth, so loudly do they proclaim by their mere existence the glory of God. But this supposition is not a necessary one; just as well and even better indeed, we can say, that here the powerfulness of the testimony is represented, and there the wide compass of its territory. The more definite דברים is added to אמר, which admits of a more general construction, in order to signify, that the matter is here of a discourse in the more restricted sense. Luther, Calvin, and others expound: There is no speech and discourse where their voice is not heard. Calvin: "He extends through a silent contrast the efficacy of this testimony which the heavens give to their Creator; as if he said: Although the nations are very different in language, yet the heavens have a common speech for instructing all in like manner, and nothing but carelessness prevents all from being taught at the mouth of this common teacher." But it is to be objected to this exposition, that it takes אמר and דברים in the sense of *dialect, language.*

in which the first certainly never occurs, nor is Gen. xi. 1 sufficient to establish it as properly belonging to the latter; that the speech and language would not be very fitly connected with the hearing; that it requires אמר to be taken in another sense than it was in ver. 2, and forcibly separates between מספרים and מגיד in ver. 1; and, finally, that it destroys the parallelism which is manifestly formed between the expressions: there is not speech, and there are not words, and: their voice is not heard. —Others expound, after Vitringa: there is, what day and night announce, no speech, and no words, whose voice one may not perceive, supplying אשר before בלי. But this gives a very tame sense; it destroys, like the other, the parallelism, and draws the whole into a single protracted period; to which it may also be added, that, according to it, the suffix in קולם must be referred to speech and words, while the analogy of the suffixes in the following verse decides for the reference to the heavens and the firmament, from which also the discourse and the knowledge proceed, which day and night deliver to each other.

Ver. 4. *Their line goes out over the whole earth, and their words even to the farthest bounds of the earth, he has made for the sun a tent in them.* The first member has occasioned great trouble to expositors. But the difficulty is less an inherent than a derived one. It immediately vanishes, if we simply and faithfully abide by the established usage, and then only consider how the meaning thus acquired suits with the context. The suffix in קום refers, as that in בהם unquestionably shows, to the heavens and the firmament, קו signifies a measuring-line. Such a line is useful only for determining the limits, the compass of the territory which any one has to receive; comp. for ex. Isa. xxxiv. 17, "His hand has divided it (Idumea) to them, (the wild beasts,) with the measuring-line; they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein," Ez. xlvii. 3; Zech. i. 16. The measuring-line must extend as far as the territory is to reach, comp. the יצא in Isa. xv. 3, ss. and especially as connected with קו, Jer. xxxi. 39. Accordingly the only legitimate translation is this: their measuring-line goes out over the whole earth; and the only legitimate exposition: the whole earth is their portion and territory. In what respect, is evident from the whole context, according to which the

heavens can come into consideration merely as the heralds of the Divine glory; and all doubt is removed by the second member, which serves to explain the first, expressly pointing to this reference: their proclamation of the Divine glory limits itself not to some one region, but reaches as far as the earth itself.—How untenable the current expositions are, is obvious from this, that Olshausen and Gesenius, finding no satisfaction in them, would read קולם for קום, their voice. The sense of *sound, speech*, which many ascribe to קו, it never has, nor can they with certainty appeal for it to the authority of the old translators, as it is doubtful whether these did not merely give a free rendering according to the sense. The signification of *string*, to which some would draw it over from established usage, to what the context is here supposed to require, is inadmissible, as קו never signifies string, but always specially measuring-line. Consequently the exposition of Hitzig is also to be rejected, which imagines an uninterrupted *chain of hymns of praise*, with which day and night, or more properly the heavens and firmament, span the earth, as we speak of the thread of a discourse. Ewald commits himself to still greater arbitrariness in the explanation of קו. There are some who, as Stier, abide by the received signification of קו, and explain: as their expanse reaches over the whole earth, so also, in like manner, their words. But this exposition destroys the parallelism, and understands the outgoing of the measuring-line of mere extent, whereas it must be regarded as designating the compass of the territory.

In the third member the Psalmist makes special mention, among the heavenly works of God, of the sun, because that is the most glorious of them, and also from a respect to the law as the spiritual sun. The suf. in בהם, which refers to the heavens and the earth, shows beyond all doubt, that we must consider the discourse and knowledge, which, according to ver. 2, day and night proclaim, as communicated to them by the heavens, and that the suf. in קולם in ver. 3 must be referred, not with many, to day and night, nor with others, to the discourse and the words, but to the heavens, that not to day and night, but to the heavens must the אמר, in its more restricted sense, as far as it is synonymous with דברים, be referred, and that also in the two first members of our verse the suffixes

must refer to the heavens. In a perfectly unwarrantable manner has De Wette sought to remove the invincible difficulty, arising from the reference of the suf. to a distant noun, by remarking, that the sun, as to thought, is comprehended in the preceding words: to the end of the world. For this were as much as: to the end of the heavens, where the sun had been thought of. But תבל, according to its derivation, (prop. the bearing, fruit-bearing,) signifies *earth*, not world, and is synonymous with the parallel ארץ. Then one does not see how there should have been a plural suf. De Wette's supposition, that it is used indeterminately, is a mere shift; Ps. xxxix. 6. cannot be compared, as there what is to be supplied is clearly given in the context. But to suppose with Maurer, that here the tent of the sun must be placed in the extremity of the earth, is much less to be admitted, since the end of the earth in common speech, and according to the parallel in the preceding context, is still a part of itself; but no one has ever ascribed the sun to the earth, and here, in particular, it is represented as the most glorious object in the heavenly regions. The tent of the sun is not to be considered as the place of his nightly repose; against this Stier justly remarks, that it is not suitable to the first mention of the sun in the heavens; it must be conceived of as not a temporary and concealed one, but as his dwelling-tent.[1] The expression: he has set a tent for it, is substantially the same as, he has prescribed a place for it. With the words of the two first members of this verse, Paul describes in Rom. x. 18, the spread of the gospel over the whole earth. This led many of the older expositors into the quite false supposition that ver. 1—6, contained a direct prophecy of Christ and the gospel. But not less objectionable is the supposition, that the Apostle used the words of our verse merely as an accidental reminiscence. The reference has a deep ground. The universality of God's manifestation of himself in nature, is a prophecy in fact of the universality of the proclamation of the gospel. If the former is not accidental, if it is grounded in the Divine nature, so must this also spring from the same Divine nature. The revelation

[1] Quite correctly already Ven.: singulis sideribus dantur tentoria tensa cum apparent, et detensa cum disparent, quae tentoria eorum stationem in campis æthereis designant.

of God in nature is for all his creatures, of which as such they form a part, a pledge that they shall also one day be made to share in the higher and more glorious revelation. It was a surety for the heathen, that the temporal limitation of salvation to Israel, was not a hindrance, but a means towards the removal of the limitation.

Ver. 5. *And he is as a bridegroom who comes out of his chamber, rejoices as a hero to run a race.* The point of comparison in the first member, is neither the delight beaming from the countenance of the bridegroom, nor his ornaments, (Isa. lxi. 10), but his vigour, power, or feeling of strength. This appears from the words: he comes forth from his chamber, prop. *e thoro*, or, *thalamo suo*, (falsely, therefore, Michaelis: ad sponsam v. excipiendam, v. domum ducendam), and likewise from the second member, which gives equal prominence to the energetic power of the sun. In German the comparison loses in both members, from the sun being feminine.

Ver. 6. *He goes forth from the end of the heavens, and runs about even to their end, and nothing is concealed from his heat.* Upon מוצא comp. *Christol.* P. III. p. 300. The על is to be explained by this, that the going round at last *touches*, reaches the ends of the heavens. The אין נסתר prop. not is concealed, there is not anything which can be concealed. The heat is not to be considered as the opposite to light, as Venema and others think, according to whom the "concealed" must refer only to the light; but as its inseparable accompaniment, *q. d.* before its warming light. These last words also have respect to the mighty power of the sun, so that the Psalmist has this, through the whole representation, before his eyes.

There follows now, in ver. 7—10, the praise of the law which has been given by this God, whose glory the heavens proclaim, and from whom, on this territory also, nothing but what is glorious and perfect can proceed. An artful arrangement in this praise is not to be overlooked. In the three verses, ver. 7—9, twelve marks of praise are ascribed to the law. These fall into six pairs, in which the second always stands to the first in the relation of effect to cause,—a relation which is intimated through the regular want of the copula in the second, and the occurrence of Jehovah only in the first member. So, for example, in ver. 7: the law of the Lord is perfect, (and hence) it quickens the

soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, (and hence) makes the simple wise. In ver. 7 and 8, the effects are uniformly a product, which the law operates in the mind of man, according to the quality indicated in the preceding member. In the concluding verse, ver. 10, the glory and preciousness of the law thus constituted, is celebrated as a whole. To the sixfold use of the name Jehovah here, there is added a seventh at the close in ver. 14.

Ver. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, quickens the soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, makes wise the simple.* To silence those who, after the example of Cocceius, would understand by תורה the gospel, many expositors maintain that it stands here in its original meaning of *instruction*, and comprehends the whole idea of religion. But this notion is altogether untenable. תורה, although certainly it meant instruction generally, is always used in the whole of the existing usage, which was formed under the influence of the Pentateuch, only of that instruction which stands in commands, always means *law*, not excepting Isa. i. 10, viii. 16. But, even if its meaning were doubtful, the following synonyms would be sufficient to remove all doubt. Occasion was given to this false view by the consideration that such high terms of praise could not be employed of the law by itself, after the declarations of the Apostle, and the testimony of experience. This consideration, however, is set aside in a legitimate way by the remark, that David only speaks of what the law is for those who, like himself, are in a state of grace, and in whom, consequently, the inmost disposition of the heart coincides with the law, of that, therefore, which theologians call the third use of the law, or its use to the regenerate, (comp. Melancthon at the close of his *Loc. de usu legis*, Calvin, *Inst.* L. ii. c. 7, § 12. Nitsch, *System.* § 155.) In this respect it is a source of internal joy, that he has in the law a pure mirror of Divine holiness, a sure directory for his actions. But Paul, on the other hand, has to do with the relation of the law to the fleshly, those sold under sin. That here the discourse is only of what the law is to believers, is manifest from the connection in which it stands with God, who primarily speaks in his own name, also from the expression, "thy servant," in ver. 11, which implies that the speaker was already in a gracious relation to God, from his naming the Lord "his rock and his redeemer," in ver. 14,

and from ver. 12 and 13, where he indeed brings into view the Divine forgiveness for many sins of imperfection, but confesses himself to be free of the presumptuous and daring violation of God's commands, and prays that, through God's grace, he may be able to remain free from such. All these are marks of a state of grace. The right view was already taken by Luther, who says: "The prophet represents to his view those, who through the word of faith have received the Spirit, and have thence become joyful, and have conceived a desire to do that which is according to the law. Thereupon he proceeds to teach, how holy, how righteous and good the law is, which appears grievous and hard to those, who have not the spirit, the blame, however, being not in the law, but in the inclination. Moses was in fact the meekest man upon earth, Numb. xii. 3, though they did not know it. And so also is the law of the Lord very excellent; only the wickedness of our heart understands it not, till the voice of the bridegroom takes away from his own the wickedness, and he gives the Spirit, and then the law is understood and loved. The law does nothing of this sort by itself, but it becomes such a law through the heat of the sun, which breaks forth through faith on the word." The law is named perfect, as being a pure expression of the will of God, and in contrast to the imperfect results of human thought on this territory, even on the part of the well disposed. Because it is in itself perfect, it makes those also perfect who follow it; comp. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. The consequence of the law's being perfect is, that it quickens the heart, namely, by its putting an end to painful uncertainty in reference to the will of God and the means of pleasing him, which but for the law would still in some measure continue even with believers, and such as are brought to partake of the gifts of the Spirit, and by opening up a perfectly secure way, by which one may attain to righteousness before God, and the peace of a good conscience, and consequently to a joyful hope of salvation. That the perfectness of the law is in so far the cause of the quickening, appears from the following, "makes wise the simple," which more definitely points out the way and manner in which the law produces quickening. Many, and recently Stier, expound: *converts the soul.* But this is inadmissible as to the fact,—conversion has nothing to do here, for the law cannot work it, the subject of discourse at present

is simply what the law is for believers, those who have already been converted,—and so it is also in a verbal point of view. The expression, placed so absolutely, as here without a *terminus ad quem*, uniformly denotes quickening, refreshment: the soul is as it were escaped from the pain and misery in which it was imbedded, comp. Lam. i. 11, 16; Ruth iv. 15; Psalm xxiii. 3. *Testimony*, עדות, the law is named, not as being a kind of solemn declaration of the Divine will, but because it testifies against sin, comp. my Beitr. Part iii. p. 640. *Sure*, certain the testimony is named, in contrast to the uncertain, vacillating, shifting knowledge of reason in matters of this nature. By reason of this very sureness the law is fitted to make the simple wise, (σοφίσαι 2 Tim. iii. 15.) The expression *simple*, does not denote a particular class among believers, as if there were others who knew enough of themselves, but it is a common predicate of all believers viewed as apart from the Divine law. Believers are also simple still; for they are even yet deficient in their best estate as to a complete knowledge of the Divine will; but they are only simple, while others are blind fools, נבלים. The exposition of Stier and others: the susceptible, open, is refuted by the contrast with *wise*, comp. also מבין פתיים in Psalm cxix. cxxx. On the other hand, Luther's: *silly*, is too strong. פתי marks only a deficiency, a want, not a positively perverted disposition, an ignorance, which has its root in the region of the understanding, not such as springs from an ethical ground. Gesen. in his Thes.: dicitur de ea stoliditate, cujus fons est in inopia consilii, prudentiae, disciplinae et rerum usus, qualis puerorum et adolescentulorum est pellectu facilium, licet non malorum et noxiorum.

Ver. 8. *The commandments of the Lord are right, rejoice the heart, the statute of the Lord is clear, enlightens the eyes.* The law receives the name of פקודים, in so far as it delivers to man charges, which he has to execute, the name of מצוה, in so far as it prescribes to him what he has to do. That the law of the Lord rejoices the heart, appears as the effect of its rectitude, just as its quickening the soul was represented as the effect of its perfectness. The believer acknowledges with heart-felt joy and gratitude that he knows the will of God from the revelation he has given, and that he is thereby delivered from the deceit of his own imagination, and of his own heart, and has obtained

a sure guide through life. The *enlightening of the eyes* is referred by many to the communication of the light of Divine knowledge. In that case: enlightening the eyes, would stand related to: rejoicing the heart, just as in ver. 7: making wise the simple, does to: quickening the soul. There: it is perfect and sure, and therefore quickens the soul, while it makes wise the simple. Here: it is right and clear, and therefore rejoices the heart, while it enlightens the eyes. However, as the expression: enlightens the eyes, so commonly occurs in the sense of making brisk and joyful,—pain and misery make the eyes dim, heavy and dull, comp. on Psalm xiii. 3,—it will be well for us also to adopt this signification here. Accordingly the words: "enlightening the eyes," correspond precisely to those: "rejoicing the heart," and in the preceding verse, not to the "making wise the simple," but rather to the, "quickening the soul."

Ver. 9. *The fear of the Lord is pure, continues for ever, the judgments of the Lord are truth, righteous altogether.* The fear of the Lord here marks the instruction afforded by God for fearing him, Psalm xxxiv. 11; Prov. i. 29; ii. 5; xv. 33; the law, which, according to Deut. xvii. 19, should serve the purpose of leading men "to fear the Lord their God." That the word, fear of God, is thus without anything further consigned here to its legal rule, points to the internal connection between the two, to the circumstance, that every apparent act of godly fear, which as to its substance is fashioned after men's own notions of good, is rather a dishonouring of God. The consequence of the purity of the law, which excludes all purification, all complete or partial reform, is its perpetual continuance. This is naturally to be referred to the substance of the Old Testament law, and indeed to the whole of it—for the limitation to the so-called moral law is an arbitrary one—in reference to which the Lord also says, that he had come, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, Matt. v. 17. The destruction as it has taken place under the New Testament, respects only the form. In regard to its substance the law is so unconditionally eternal, that according to another saying of our Lord, not one jot or tittle of it shall perish, Matt. v. 18. The *truth* of the Lord's judgments consists in this, that they do not assert themselves to be judgments of the Lord, but really are judgments of the Lord; and since nothing can proceed from the Lord but what is righteous, they are righteous

altogether, without any exception. The truth stands opposed to lies, to deceit. If by truth is understood not the *formal*, but the *material*, then the expression: they are righteous altogether, passes from the relation of effect to that of cause, and is merely co-ordinate with the other: they are truth.

Ver. 10. *They, more precious than gold, and much fine gold, and sweeter than honey and the honey-comb.* Calvin: "Here again it is clear, that the discourse is not of the naked precept and the mere dead letter, (more correctly: of the relation of the law to the faithful and spiritual, not of its relation to the fleshly and such as are destitute of faith.) For if the law when merely commanding terrified, how then could it be deserving of love? certainly, if it is separated from the hope of forgiveness and from the spirit of Christ, it is so far from the sweetness of honey, that it rather by its bitterness kills the poor soul." Luther: "This is a great wonder of the Holy Spirit and of the judgments of the Most High, that they change everything, rendering that most acceptable, which before was most distasteful. For what do men seek more eagerly than riches and pleasures? and yet the spirit has far greater delight in the law of God, than the flesh can have in its goods and pleasures."

The third strophe, ver. 11—14: the law in relation to the Psalmist, as to every individual, who finds in it the fitting expression of his feelings.

Ver. 11. *Also thy servant is enlightened by them, whosoever keeps them, has great reward.* The participle נִזְהָר is indicative of this, that the enlightening, or reminding, through the law is one that is continually proceeding, abiding, comp. Ew. § 349. The expression: Whosoever keeps them, is, when viewed in regard to the context, as much as, the keeping of them, as to all, so also to me, brings great reward; I also have received instructions from thy law, as to how my life should be directed, and if I continue to act agreeably to this knowledge, great reward. How the Psalmist recognised the truth of this principle from his own experience, is shown by Ps. xviii. 20—27. This declaration, at the same time, draws the Psalmist on to the following prayer for the removal of the hindrances which threatened to deprive him in whole or in part, of the reward which attends the keeping of the law. He, also, who stands in the faith needs pardon for the sins which are the offspring of infirmity, if he is to

come to the full enjoyment of this reward, ver. 12. He needs, moreover, the constant preservation of God through his Spirit, from presumptuous transgressions of the law, from prevailing sin, which threatens wholly to bereave him of the reward. We are not to conclude from the Psalmist's expectation of the reward, that he was a hireling. We should otherwise have to throw away also the New Testament on account of 1 Tim. iv. 8, and many other passages which enjoin a seeking of the reward. The Psalmist's really impelling principle to the keeping of the law, is the love of God; the reward he takes with a grateful heart as an agreeable addition, as a declaration of God, that the service rendered was well pleasing to him. Luther: "This is said for the consolation of those who take pains not to have their desire for reward gratified, as is wont to be the case with hirelings and servants; I mean those who, by their little bits of work, would make God I know not what sort of merchant, because they would take no pains in doing the judgments of the Lord. Therefore does Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 58, console those who labour in the service of God, exhorting them to be stedfast, immoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. For the servants of the Lord must know, that they please God in their work, so that they must not languish, nor sink into despair; since God desires to have willing and cheerful labourers. But if they please God, there will infallibly come a great reward, though they do not seek it, because God cannot deny himself, who said to Abraham, 'I am thy exceeding great reward.'"

Ver. 12. *Errors, who can mark them? From those which are secret acquit me.* The first member discloses the depth of human depravity, which draws even believers into many failings. Berleb. Bible: "Who can mark them? Who knows them all and is able to number them? Who can keep so sharp a watch, as to mark how often something of the old proud disposition springs up against the new nature of the spirit of faith?"—The second member grounds upon this the prayer for forgiveness, the necessity for which rests upon the fact, that sin everywhere cleaves to us, while it appears in forms scarcely discernible by the finest human eye, in many ways conceals itself, and assumes the appearance of good. Did sin possess only a gross character, we might satisfy ourselves with a simple "lead us not into temp

tation;" but as it also knows how to refine itself, and become invisible, we need besides to pray, "forgive us our transgressions."—It is not sins generally, but a special kind of sins, for which David begs the Divine forgiveness, those which cleave even to believers, and consequently persons well inclined, sins of infirmity. שגיאה is = שגגה of the law, for ex. Lev. iv. 2, error, *peccatum per imprudentiam commissum*, and נסתרות, *concealed* sins, are such as have no gross *corpus delicti* connected with them, belong mainly to the territory of the spirit, the thought, the feeling, and withdraw themselves from the observation of others, and more or less also from one's own. That these are mainly to be thought of, is evident from the respect which the נסתרות carries to מי יבין, *q. d.*: since the failings are so numerous and delicate that no one can mark them all, do thou free me from those concealed sins, which by their very fineness, render their entire extirpation impossible. נקני, according to Stier and others, must signify not only forgiveness, but also internal purification. But it was justly remarked already, by S. Schmidt, that "it is a judicial term, and means acquittal. For the sin of nature is not extirpated in this world, but forgiven." נָקָה always signifies to *declare* innocent, to acquit, never to *make* innocent, nor can it possibly do so, for one may well indeed be blameless, (ver. 13,) but cannot be made so otherwise than in the sense of being acquitted.

Ver. 13. *Also from presumptuous ones keep thy servant, let them not have dominion over me; so shall I be blameless, and remain innocent from great iniquity.* From sins of infirmity the Psalmist passes on to sins of deliberation. As for the first, he entreats the Divine pardon, so in regard to these he asks the Divine preservation. To the preceding verse the petition, "forgive us our sins," corresponds, and here it is the petition, "lead us not into temptation." Our Psalm shows us, what internal connection subsists between the decalogue and the Lord's prayer. That the verb זוד, with its derived nouns, conveys the idea of *intentional, presumptuous*, and *daring* sins, in opposition to such as spring from infirmity, is clear from Ex. xxi. 14, Deut. xviii. 22, xvii. 12, 1 Sam. xvii. 28. זדים is the standing designation of those who raise themselves proudly and rashly against God, despise his word, and break his law. The contrast between זדים

and שגיאות here, is precisely the same as the contrast between בשגגה and ביד רמה, sinning with a high hand, *i. e.* openly, freely, and boldly, in Numb. xv. 27—31, a passage which forms the basis of the New Testament doctrine of the sin against the Holy Ghost, comp. Heb. x. 26—28. Just as here, the prayer for forgiveness is confined to the שגיאות, while the Psalmist prays to be kept from the זדים, which would have the effect of placing him beyond a state of grace, so these sacrifices are to be offered only for those who had sinned בשגגה; he, on the other hand, who had sinned ביד רמה, is to be cut off from his people," because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and broken his commandment." An example of a sin בזדון, or ביד רמה is the transgression of him who gathered wood on the Sabbath-day, Numb. xv. 32, ss. He was without mercy punished with death. But the sin which, under the Old Testament dispensation, bore so frightful a character, that whosoever committed it, he forfeited his earthly life, unless he received mercy from God, attained first under the New Testament to its proper completion, in which it inevitably draws after it eternal death. For the greatness of the punishment is determined by the greatness of the internally and externally offered grace.—Presumptuous sins are here personified as tyrants who strive to bring the servant of God into unbecoming subjection to them. That the Lord alone can keep from this servitude, discovers the depth of human corruption. We are not with many to take זדים without any thing farther in the sense of superciliousness, or of determined sinning, as appears from the usage according to which the word correctly denotes persons, as also from the words: "Let them not have dominion over me," which points to real or supposed persons. But just as little must we, with others, understand by זדים, real persons. Palpably false is this exposition, when by such persons are apprehended the national enemies, and by the dominion an external supremacy. In that case, too, the following words, "then shall I be perfect," &c., yield no sense, and the idea in this connection is quite foreign. It is a more tolerable exposition, which takes the dominion in a moral point of view: keep me from the influence and seduction of daring sinners. But though by this exposition the contrast, so pointedly indicated through the גם and the double אז, between sins of infirmity and presumptuous sins, is not entirely destroy-

ed, yet is it less directly put and cast into the shade; the dominion would be something out of the way, (comp. what is said of sin in Rom. vi. 14;) and חשך at least nowhere else occurs of a keeping from bad company, while it certainly does so twice of keeping from what is sinful, Gen. xx. 6, and 1 Sam. xxv. 39, "and hath kept his servant from evil." To the *then*, there is commonly added: If I obtain these two. But this is opposed by the פשע, which exclusively refers to the sins described in our verse. It marks the greatest sins, prop. apostacy, revolt, such as זדים, bold despisers of God commit, impieties, Job xxxiv. 37. This exposition is also opposed by the תמם, which is properly used only of inherent innocence. The אתם is 1 pers. fut. of תמם, comp. on the ו, Ewald, p. 466, Small Gr. § 270. An innocent, blameless person is the Psalmist, notwithstanding his sins of infirmity. נקיתי points back to נקני in the preceding verse: to be made blameless, and to remain blameless, these are the two conditions of salvation. But the realisation of the latter also can only proceed from God. In the expression, from much, or great iniquity, there is implied the further idea: into which I shall otherwise inevitably fall. The פשע stands in contrast to the unavoidable smaller transgressions spoken of in the preceding context.

Ver. 14. *Let the words of my mouth be acceptable to thee, and the meditations of my heart before thee, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.* The Psalmist prays for the favourable reception of his song, not in regard to it as a production of sacred art, but in regard to its substance and matter, in reference to the two petitions in which it runs out; or, it is not as a poet, but as a suppliant, that the Psalmist takes the Divine acceptance into account. This clearly appears from the two predicates of God, on which the Psalmist grounds his prayer, and which led him confidently to hope for the granting of it. In seeking that the Lord would be well pleased, the Psalmist seems to use a sacrificial term, perhaps the very words which were spoken by the priests at the presentation of the sacrifice. At least the expression does stand in respect to offerings, comp. Lev. xix. 5, 7; xxii. 19, 20, 29; xxiii. 11; Isa. lvi. 7; lx. 7; Rom. xii. 1. Such a transference of language was the more natural, as sacrifice itself was an embodied prayer. The words: before thee, are not so well connected with the well-pleasing, which is elsewhere

commonly used without any farther addition, and only in Ex. xxviii. 38, is coupled with: before the Lord, and from which they are too far separated; it is better to connect them with the meditation of the heart. The expression, *my rock*, denotes here also faithfulness, certainty, according to which the Lord does not leave his people, see on Ps. xviii. 2. He would deny his rock-nature, if he would not pardon their sins of infirmity, and keep them from flagrant misdeeds.

PSALM XX.

The people wish for their king, that the Lord, the God of Israel would be with him in the impending battle, and grant him the victory, ver. 1—5. They declare their firm confidence that the Lord will protect his anointed and his kingdom, ver. 6—8. They conclude with the prayer that the Lord would do as he had inwardly promised, ver. 9.

That the Psalm is not in the general, "a song of Israel for and in behalf of its king, as we have in our song-book songs in which there are prayers for kings and rulers, and honour is done to their office," that Israel rather presents in it a special entreaty for help to his anointed, in the immediate prospect of battle, and utters his firm, triumphant confidence therein, is evident from the "in the day of distress," mentioned in ver. 1, as compared with ver. 7, 8, which determine more exactly the kind of distress as a warlike strait. According to ver. 3, the Psalm was sung along with the solemn offerings which the king presented at his going out to battle.

Many expositors conceive that the Psalm refers to a particular occasion. Several follow the Syriac in connecting it with the Ammonitic-Syrian war. But no ground exists for any such special reference; there appears in it, indeed, no individualising trait, nothing to conduct us over the general application to the troubles of war; and this generality of its aim is specially countenanced by "the day of distress" in ver. 1, and "the day of our calling" in ver. 9. The beginning and conclusion both seem to indicate that the Psalm was to be sung as often as the troubles of war required the people to apply to God for help.

If we hold the Psalm to be thus general in its character, we must also admit that it carries a respect to Christ and his kingdom, that the Christian Church justly appropriates it as an expression of her longing for the triumph of her cause, and of her confident hope. For the kingdom of David, to which it refers, culminated in Christ. He is in the full sense "the anointed of the Lord." On the other hand, the Psalm refers to Christian kings only when they are his servants, and in so far as they are so.

It has been objected to the composition of the Psalm as David's, which is affirmed in the superscription, that he does not appear as the speaker, but the people. This objection, however, is of no force. The person addressed is not David in particular, but the anointed of the Lord in general; the speaker at any rate is not the Psalmist, but he speaks in the name of the people; and if so, of whom might it be more readily expected that he should stand forth as an interpreter of the feelings of the Lord's people in this respect, than of David, who always lived in and with the church, always served it with his poetical gift, identified himself with its circumstances, and cared for its wants. It is only by paying too little heed to this, that we can here entertain any doubt of the correctness of the statement made in the superscription. Besides, the Davidic authorship is confirmed by the numerous allusions to the Psalms of David, which shall be noticed in the exposition. Then, whatever witnesses for the Davidic authorship of Ps. xxi. also makes for this, for they are connected as a pair. The great simplicity, lightness, and transparent clearness of the Psalm, which have been urged against its ascription to David, are to be accounted for from its character; these are the properties of a national song.

Luther says briefly and well: "It seems to me as if David had composed this Psalm, that it might serve as a devout and pious battle-cry, whereby he might admonish himself and the people, and draw them to prayer."

Ver. 1. *The Lord hear thee in the day of distress, the name of the God of Jacob exalt thee.* That we are not with Hitzig to expound: *will* hear thee, but: *may* he hear thee, and that the following futures are also to be taken so, appears from ידשנה, he declares for fat, he favourably accepts, in ver. 3, from the ירננה, in ver. 5, and the expression: the king hear us, at the

close, which refers back to the beginning. שגב means to lift up, to exalt, in the sense of delivering, to transfer to a high and secure place, comp. lix. 1; xci. 14 and xviii. 2, where David names God his *height*. God's being called the God of Jacob, is *q. d.* the God, who was and is the God of Jacob, in his person, and that of his posterity, and points to the relation which formed the ground of the hearing, and the elevation upon which the joy and security of the prayer rests. The expression: the name of Jacob's God, imports either, God, who manifested himself as Jacob's God, or Jacob's God, who manifested himself as such in a fulness of *deeds*. God is not merely the God of Jacob, he is also *named* so, has disclosed himself as such, and made for himself a name. His election is not a dark one, but manifest, confirmed by facts. Without such facts the God of Jacob would be nameless, his name would be a *nomen vanum*.

Ver. 2. *Send thee help from the sanctuary, and out of Zion support thee.* Here also is the help of God sought on the ground of his covenant, his relation to the church. This is implied in the words: out of the sanctuary, out of Zion, comp. on Ps. xiv. 7.

Ver. 3. *Remember all thy meat-offerings, and accept thy burnt-offerings.* That we are here to think, not of the sacrifices of the king generally, but specially of the festive oblations which were presented at the going forth to battle, (comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 9, ss., where Saul offers such a sacrifice, with the view of entreating God's favour, and making him gracious toward him,) appears from the Selah, which can only be explained on the supposition, that between this verse and the following one, the work of offering the sacrifices intervened, during which there ensued a solemn pause. The word: remember, seems to allude to the name אַזְכָּרָה, which, in the law, imports what of the meat-offering was burnt on the altar, because it put God as it were, in remembrance of the offerer, comp. Lev. ii. 2; vi. 8, &c. The remembering stands opposed to forgetting, or indifferent reception. The expression is likewise used in the New Testament, comp. Acts x. 31. According to the entire spiritual point of view, from which the Psalmist speaks, it is of course to be understood, that the sacrifices are here considered, not in regard to the body, but in regard to the soul, which inspirits them, and that their well pleased reception by God, was hoped

for only on the ground of there being already there the internal aim and disposition, which were embodied in them. In the symbolical transactions of the law, the presentation of the burnt-offering expressed the consecration and yielding up of self. Whoever presented the meat-offering, which was essentially connected with the burnt-offering, vowed that he would present to God the spiritual increase due to him, good works. Where such profession is made in truth, there is an agreement to be found with the subjective conditions on which the dispensation of salvation proceeds, then God cannot do otherwise than give to the suppliant according to his heart, and fulfil all his counsel. Luther remarks: "Just as in the new law, there are other persons, other matters, other times, other places, so are there are also other sacrifices; though still there remains one faith and one spirit; the external only has changed, the internal remains the same.—Wherefore, our sacrifice, which we must present to God in the time of trouble, is a broken heart, and the confession of sin, and this we do when we sigh after God, in the time of trouble, recognise our distress as righteous, bear patiently the mortification of self, and yield ourselves up to God, as ready to do his will."—דישן signifies to make fat, Ps. xxiii. 5, and then to declare fat, good, to accept with satisfaction. The ה is the ה of striving, comp. Ew. § 293.

Ver. 4. *Give thee what thy heart desires, and fulfil all thy counsels.* The discourse is not of the desires and counsels of the king generally, but only of those which relate to the present necessity.

Ver. 5. *May we rejoice over thy salvation, and through the name of our God be lifted up; the Lord fulfil all thy petitions.* Various expositors render: then will we rejoice, &c., but this construction is inadmissible, partly on account of the form which discovers itself to be the optative through the appended ה, partly on account of the last member, which, like the preceding context, still contains the expression of a wish. We must, therefore, expound: may we rejoice, &c., *q. d.* may occasion be furnished us, through thy salvation, for rejoicing. The name of God stands here emphatically, as in ver. 1. The explanation of נדגל is uncertain; the supposition that it is denomin. of דגל, banner, is opposed by Cant. v. 11, where the part. per. occurs in the sense of exalted, or distinguished. Probably the verb is

related to גדל. The LXX. already rendered, as we have done, μεγαλυνθησόμεθα, and the Vulgate, *magnificabimur*.

Ver. 6. *Now know I that the Lord helps his anointed, he hears him from his holy heaven, through his right hand salutary exploits.* Till now the people had spoken in the plural, here they speak as an ideal person in the singular. That there is here a great turning-point, is also indicated by this, that the discourse is no more addressed to the king, but is spoken of him. The *now* is to be explained thus, that the suppliants suddenly obtain confidence of being heard. This *now* also, while it shows that the transition from prayer to confidence is first made here in a quick and immediate manner, precisely as, for example, in Ps. vi. 8, speaks against those who would draw even ver. 5 into the second strophe. The *now I know* is quite misunderstood by those who, with Maurer, would refer it to a just won victory; it refers to an internal fact, and Luther has quite correctly explained it: "Henceforth the prophet is full of sure hope, and converts into a promise what he had hitherto been praying for. For in such a manner is the affection produced, which rests its full confidence in God, doubts not that what has been prayed for shall infallibly be done. Faith, if it is truly in the heart, takes such a firm hold of that which it believes, that it can speak of nothing as more certain, and it knows it, indeed, to be as certain as if it had actually happened. Therefore he does not say here: I conceive, I think, but I *know*." The deliverance is here expected from heaven, as in ver. 2, from Zion. The two together, that God dwells in Zion, and also in heaven, constitute the sure ground of hope. The first proves that God *will* help, the second that he *can* help; the first secures God's love, the second his almightiness. That the heaven is marked as *holy*, strengthens the reference to the former, as the proper manifestation of his holiness is his fidelity in keeping promise. On the expression: from his holy heaven, see on Ps. xi. 4; the right hand of God is mentioned in the same connection in Ps. xviii. 36; ישע occurs also in Ps. xii. 5.

Ver. 7. *Some chariots and some horses, but we make mention of the name of the Lord our God;* ver. 8. *They stoop and fall, but we rise and stand upright.* As the object of confidence in the world and in the church is different, so is also the fate; there from height to depth, here from depth to height. הזכיר

always signifies to make mention, never to praise (where the latter signification is adopted it rests on a false meaning); and this signification must here be the more firmly held, as it exists also in the radical passage, Ex. xxiii. 13, "the name of other gods ye shall not make mention of," as appears from the parallel, "neither let it be heard in thy mouth." That the mention is in the way of praise, does not stand in the word itself, but in the constr. with ב, pointing to the feeling of confidence with which the person mentioning rests in the object. Parallel to ver. 7 is 1 Sam. xvii. 45, where David says to Goliath, "thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord God of Hosts," Ps. xxxiii. 17, Isa. xxxi. 3. By the chariots, chariots of war are to be understood. The contrast lies between human means of help, and the assistance of God. The preterites of ver. 8 are to be explained by this, that the people in faith see the enemies as already conquered. Luther: "Faith alone which commits itself to God, can sing the song of triumph before the victory, and raise the shout of joy before help has been obtained; for to faith all is permitted. It trusts in God, and so really has what it believes, because faith deceives not; as it believes so is it done." Before the catastrophe here described the enemies had the upper hand, and the people of God were put to the worse. This especially appears from קוּם, which means, not to stand, but to stand up. Luther: "At the commencement of the attack the ungodly, indeed, appear to stand firm, while they confide in their chariots and horsemen; on the other hand, the pious who trust in the name of the Lord, appear to them to be far from strong. But faith argues thus; although those stand, and we seem to be weak and to fall, yet we are sure of this, that presently shall matters be entirely reversed, and they shall fall; but we shall be raised on high and stand, nay, we are already lifted up and stand erect. O what a noble pattern of faith is this!"

Ver. 9. *Lord help, the king hear us when we call.* The last strophe, that of the renewed prayer, stands in close relation to the preceding context. The *help* has respect to, *he helps* in ver. 6; the *hear us* points back to, *he will hear him,* in the same verse. The prayer springs from the promise: the Lord is entreated to keep what he has promised. By this reference to the promise, the prayer at the end distinguishes itself from that at the beginning. The expression: hear us, here is much more

impressive than that there: hear thee, which is now resumed again. A special emphasis rests on הַמֶּלֶךְ; Luther: "Hear thou us, thou who truly art our king. For David, who serves thee, is not king, and governs not his, but thy kingdom. With which thought he vehemently moves God, that is, he teaches us to move God, as one who then is moved, when we ourselves are so. For how should he not hear when his kingdom, his interest, his honour is in danger? In other words, we then pray most earnestly when we have confidence that we are God's kingdom and his heritage. For then we seek not our own, and are certain that he will not abandon a cause which belongs to him, and a kingdom which is his, especially when we call upon him for this." As King of Israel, God appears already in Deut. xxxiii. 5, comp. Ps. xlviii. 3. Without ground several expositors, following the LXX. and Vulgate: domine salvum fac regem, leave the accents, and connect "the king" with the first member. By this exposition the sense of the first member is weakened; the simple: Lord help, is more impressive; then, in the second member, the designation of God is awanting, which grounds the prayer for help; and what is the chief point, the transition from the address to the third person is then deprived of all occasion, on which account also the Vulgate, on its own authority, makes the address here: et exaudi nos. The expression: in the day of our calling, refers to Deut. xv. 2.

PSALM XXI.

The people testify their joy at the rich benefits which the Lord has bestowed upon his king, ver. 1—6, express the hope, that through God he would destroy all his enemies, ver. 8—12, and conclude by praising the Lord, ver. 13.

The speakers ascend first to the Lord—O Lord what hast thou done to the king, ver. 1, ss., then come down to the king, first speaking of him, ver. 7, then to him: O king what wilt thou do in the Lord, ver. 8—12; finally again ascend to the Lord, ver. 13, praising the Lord for what he has done to the king, and what the king has done in him.

In the address to God the benefits are more comprehensively and generally described: perpetual continuance of dominion, salvation, strength, honour; on the other hand, in the address to

the king, a particular point is specially brought out, namely, how through God's help he will become superior to all his enemies.

Various expositors, in particular Kaiser, Hitzig, Koester, suppose that our Psalm holds a closer relation to Ps. xx. than that the people in both present themselves before God under the distresses of their king; that in Ps. xx. the king's proceeding to war is delineated, here his return home; that what is there wished, is here thankfully acknowledged, the salvation desired in the one, being spoken of as having been found in the other, Ps. xxi. 1, and the wish here mentioned in ver. 2 as obtained, being that which was expressed there. But this supposition is quite groundless. Our Psalm does not give thanks for any particular victory granted to the king, but for strength and salvation in general, for dominion received, "thou settest a crown of gold upon his head," and what is perfectly decisive, for "length of days for ever and ever," ver. 4.

According to De Wette the Psalm must be a wish for prosperity in behalf of the king, while the battle was impending, with an introduction in ver. 1—7, in which the deliverance just about to be afforded to the king, is celebrated. But then we cannot explain the conclusion in ver. 13, where the Lord is thanked for what has already been obtained, as appears from this alone, that De Wette feels himself obliged, from love to his hypothesis, to change thanks and praise into "a prayer for Jehovah's help."

The only correct view is this: The Psalmist expresses the thanksgivings of the people for the promises given to David in 2 Sam. vii. and their joyful hope in regard to the fulfilment of these. It is only by this view that we can explain ver. 4, according to which an eternal duration of life is guaranteed to the king, and ver. 6, according to which he has been advanced to eternal blessing—passages which exclude all reference to any single royal individual as such. The supposition of a hyperbolical mode of speech, which in itself is to be rejected, appears the more objectionable when we compare the promise in 2 Sam. vii., and the other Psalms, which have their foundation in it, Psalms lxxxix. cxxxii. cx.

This Psalm forms a side-piece to Ps. xviii., from which it is separated only by Ps. xix. and Ps. xx. which with this is united into a pair. In Ps. xviii. David presents to the Lord, in presence of the Church, thanks for the glorious promise, which was already delivered in 2 Sam. vii., here he utters in the name of the people

grateful joy for the same promise. His aim is to call forth and quicken in the mind of the Church a feeling of gratitude toward the Lord, of love toward his anointed, of immoveable confidence in the prospect of danger.

Precisely as here, David, in his last words, as recorded in 2 Sam. xxiii. finds in the promise of the Lord, 1. The pledge of salvation for his house, ver. 5; and 2. The pledge of destruction in regard to his enemies, the sons of Belial, ver. 6, 7.

The exclusively Messianic exposition, which has been defended by many of the older commentators, and latterly by Rosenmüller, in his 2d ed., is deprived by our view of the foundation which it conceived it had formed in ver. 4 and 7. It is opposed even by the undeniable reference, which the Psalm carries to 2 Sam. vii. This admits of the application to Christ only in so far as the promise found its last and highest fulfilment in him, in whom the royal stem of David culminated, but at the same time imperiously demands the reference to Christ in this sense. Apart from Christ the words: thou givest him length of days for ever and ever, and: thou settest him for blessing for ever, are nothing but a dream of enthusiasm.

The testimony of the superscription in behalf of the Davidic authorship is confirmed by characteristic allusions to the Davidic Psalms, many of which have been noticed by Hitzig. Then the sprightly, confidential tone of the Psalm points to the times of David, which shows that the idea had still come into no conflict with the reality, as it did latterly in so important a manner through the degeneracy of the line of David. How entirely otherwise does Ps. lxxxix. sound, which was composed after the beginning of this conflict!

First in ver. 1—6 we have the blessing in relation to the blessed, the general principle in ver. 1, the expansion of it in ver. 2—6.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, the king rejoices over thy strength, and how greatly does he rejoice over thy salvation!* Properly, *in* thy strength, *in* thy salvation. The *in* stands for our *over*, according to another mode of contemplation. There the joy rests *in*, here *upon* its object. The strength, the salvation of the Lord, are the things promised by the Lord, and in consequence of the promise to be granted by him. For יָגִיל, the Masorites would

without ground read יִגֵּל, the fut. apoc. with abbr. vowels on account of the transference of the tone to the first syllable. Ew., p. 415.

Ver. 2. *Thou gavest him the wish of his heart, and the desire of his lips thou didst not withhold from him.* The wish does not simply denote here the wished-for thing—this is opposed by the parallel: the desire of his lips—it is rather to give the wish, *i. q.* to grant, or fulfil to him. The silent wish, and the spoken prayer, stand in contrast. Luther: "The arrangement is certainly fine here, namely, that the prayer of the heart must go before, without which the prayer of the lips is an unprofitable bawling." By connecting this with the preceding context, which begins to be expanded here, the desire comes to be more exactly determined, as one after deliverance and strength, and also, by connecting it with what follows, much more strictly, as one after continuance of dominion in his line, honour and glory in his posterity. De Wette's affirmation, that it is "general, and not to be understood of any determinate wish," is clearly refuted by ver. 4, which is linked to our verse by the words: he desired life of thee.—That the promise in 2 Sam. vii. was a hearing of prayer for David, is not expressly said there, but it may be regarded as self-evidently implied, as certainly no king is without thought for the future state of his offspring, as under the Old Test. the interest taken in the offspring was peculiarly lively, and as the fate of David's race must have lain all the nearer to his heart, that he had constantly before his eyes the mournful fate of the family of Saul. If the promise had not met the ardent wishes and prayers of David, it could scarcely have made so deep an impression upon him, or filled him with such triumphant joy and inward gratitude.—The preterites of this verse are falsely taken by many expositors aoristically with reference to the following futures. David's desire after the perpetuity of his kingdom, and salvation for his seed, was already satisfied by the promise. The discourse is here of a fact already past and concluded.—The Selah stands suitably between the indication and the further expansion, admonishing us before the latter to consider the grace of God, which brought satisfaction to the wish of his servant.

Ver. 3. *For thou surprisest him with the blessings of prosperity, thou settest upon his head a crown of gold.* In reference to the

connection with what precedes, Luther says excellently: "But what has the heart desired? What have the lips wished? This comes next." קדם, to surprise, comp. on Ps. xvii. 12; xviii. 5. The character of joyful surprise appears throughout the whole of that prayer of David, which he made after receiving the promise, in 2 Sam. vii. The "blessings of the good," as much as, standing in good, or prosperity, denote the entire idea of the benefits which the Lord promised to give to David's posterity. The closer description of these benefits is given in what follows. The setting on of the crown marks the bestowment of dominion. David was crowned, as it were, anew,—or even for the first time, for the earlier crowning did not come, in this respect, into consideration,—when he received that great promise of the everlasting supremacy of his offspring. He then, for the first time, became king in the true and proper sense. The kings of the Philistines, to distinguish themselves from the poor *elective* kings, took the name of Abimelech, king's-father, and here was unspeakably more than there! That respect could not be had to David's first crowning, or to the conferring on him of the kingly office in general, is shown by the following context, which is to be regarded as a farther enlargement of the words before us.

Ver. 4. *He asked of thee life, thou gavest him long life for ever and ever.* God has so far placed a golden crown on David's head, as he gives him to reign perpetually in his posterity. Calvin and many other expositors think that a comparison is here made between David's earlier time, when, surrounded as he was by pressing dangers, he must have regarded it as a special favour if he was delivered from immediate death, and the later time, when, so far above his boldest wishes, he obtained from God the promise that he should for ever live and reign in his posterity. But the reference of the words: for life he asked of thee, is better made to the wish of David to have his life continued in his posterity, a wish which, as is said in the second member, was more than fulfilled by God. Then the asking of life comes to be in perfect correspondence to the wish of the heart, and the desire of the lips in ver. 2, and the life which David asks for himself runs on the same line with the length of days which was granted to him. With the "length of days for ever and ever," is to be compared 2 Sam. vii. 13, "I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever," and ver. 16, "and thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee,

thy throne shall be established for ever;" Ps. lxxxix. 4, "thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

Ver. 5. *Great is his honour through thy salvation, glory and majesty thou layest upon him.* David will rejoice in his seed being perpetually continued in the full enjoyment of the kingly honour and glory. Ver. 6. *For thou settest him for blessing for ever, thou makest him bright with joy before thy countenance.* Thou settest him for blessing—the plural points to the rich fatness of the blessing—for, thou blessest him so that he seems to be blessing itself, comp. Gen. xii. 2. The joy with the Lord's countenance (the very peculiar expression, *with* thy countenance, is used in the very same connection also in Ps. xvi. 11,) is the joy which arises from David's being in fellowship with the Lord's countenance, having this graciously directed toward him, therefore in substance the same as through thy favour. He does not mean the joy which is experienced from "consciousness of the Divine favour," but which the enjoyment of this gives.

Ver. 7. *For the king trusts in the Lord, and through the love of the highest he shall not be moved.* This verse, which speaks of the king, and of the Lord, forms the transition from the first part, the address to God, to the second, the address to the king. The connection with the preceding is falsely given by De Wette thus: "the king deserves it through his confidence in God." Confidence comes here into consideration not as an affection, but in respect to its object. This is shown by the parallel: he shall not be moved. The expression: he trusts in the Lord, is as much as, the Lord is his ground of hope, his Saviour. Calvin: "Though the world turns round like a wheel, whence it happens that those who were elevated to the highest point are suddenly brought down again, yet the kingdom of Judah, and its antitype, the kingdom of Christ, form an exception."

The people now tell the king what he has to hope for himself and his posterity, in consequence of the Divine promise.

Ver. 8. *Thy hand shall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out thy haters.* Ver. 9. *Thou wilt make them like a fiery oven, when thou lookest on them; the Lord in his anger will destroy them, and the fire will devour them.* In the words, "*like a fiery oven,*" the comparison, as often happens, is merely indicated, *q. d.* thou wilt put them in such a condition that they shall be as if they were in a fiery oven. We reject

the supposition of a reference to Sodom and Gomorrah; we must rather compare such passages as, Mal. iv. 1, "Behold the day comes that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them." Hupfeld's exposition, "thou wilt treat them as a fiery oven," is inadmissible. For שׁוּת does not signify, to treat. The expression: at the time of thy countenance, as much as, as soon as thou turnest to them thy countenance, lookest on them, carries a reference to this: with thy countenance, in ver. 6. Because the Lord's countenance is turned toward the king, it is frightful to the enemies. That what has hitherto been spoken of is ascribed to the king only as an instrument of God, is to be referred to God in the king, and to the king in God, is put beyond a doubt by the two last members.

Ver. 10. *Their fruit thou wilt extirpate from the earth, and their seed from the children of men.* The sense is: thou wilt entirely uproot them. Fruit and seed denote posterity, ver. 11. *For they intended evil against thee, they conceived designs, yet they are not able for it.* According to many expositors, the wickedness of the godless must here be announced as the cause of their destruction. But then it would be unsuitable to say: they are not able for it. We must rather make out the connection thus: for though they threaten destruction to thee, yet they cannot execute their designs, these shall rather turn out to their own destruction, as certainly as God has secured perpetuity to the kingdom of David. The relation of the pret. and fut. here, refer to the distinction of earlier and later in the future. The attempt is expressed by the pret., the result by the fut. Several expound: they *span* against thee evil, supposing the image to be taken from the spreading out of the net. But נטה is never used of this. We must rather expound: they inclined, *bend* evil upon thee, in order to throw it down on thee. נִגּוּד, in this sense in Ps. lxii. 3, and in the same kind of connection in 1 Chron. xxi. 10, "three things I *bend* over thee," where, in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. xxiv. 12, the corresponding, נוטל, I heave, is used.—In the expression: they cannot, are not able, what they are unable to work or accomplish, must be supplied from the context.

Ver. 12. *For thou wilt make them for shoulder, thy strings fill against their presence.* The first member: thou wilt transplant them into a condition, that they shall be altogether

shoulder, thou wilt chase them in flight, comp. on Ps. xviii. 40, where, instead of shoulder, there is neck. The *then* refers to the last words of the preceding verse, which assert the impotence of the enemy, and which contain the leading idea of this. כוּן signifies not to aim, but to load, comp. on Ps. vii. 12; xi. 2. Luther: "the troubles stimulate them to flight, and the bow meeting them in the face, compels them to retreat, so that they find themselves in a strait, and in seeking to escape the rain, go under the eaves-droppings."

Ver. 13. *Praise to thee, O Lord, for thy strength, we will sing and extol thy might.* The Psalm is not, according to the common supposition, closed with a prayer, but with the praise of the Lord, for the great grace which he has manifested to his king and people, through the promise, and its fulfilment. רוּמה not: raise thyself, or show thyself raised,—this were against the usage, comp. Ps. lvii. 5, 11, against the parallelism, and against the analogy of the conclusion of Ps. xviii. ver. 46, ss.—but: be exalted in our consciousness, *i. q.* praise to thee. God's power and strength is what he unfolds when he gives power and strength to his anointed, comp. on ver. 1.

PSALM XXII.

The Psalm contains the prayer of a sufferer. It begins with the cry, "My God, *why* hast thou forsaken me," ver. 1, 2, and then developes, as it proceeds, how completely anomalous it would be, if God, according to every appearance, intended to forsake him: thou art the Holy and the Glorious One, in all time past the faithful deliverer of thy people, ver. 3—5. In singular contrast to this stands my misery, my condition, to all appearance completely desperate, which loudly proclaims, that thou hast forsaken me, ver. 6—8:—a contrast all the more singular, that thou hast manifested thyself as my God from my early youth, so that the explanation of the difficulty cannot be found in this, that thou art not *my* God as well as *theirs*, ver. 9, 10.

The prayer, ver. 11, "be not far from me," flows out of the demonstration as to how completely anomalous the desertion would be, in which to the exclamation, "why hast thou forsaken me," there is nothing left but the single answer, "I have *not* forsaken thee," and the argument, or basis of this prayer, "for

trouble is near while there is no helper," leads on to a detailed description of the trouble, after which the prayer returns developed and strengthened. The whole description of the trouble, ver. 12—18, is directed to show, that it had come to the very last extremity with the sufferer, that now *to be far away*, that now not to help, would mean generally and completely to forsake, which, according to ver. 1—10, is impossible, inasmuch as it would involve God in opposition to himself: the sufferer is now hovering between existence and non-existence, he is *in articulo mortis*, the next moment he will no longer be an object of the Divine assistance at all; surrounded by powerful and furious enemies, in a state of complete exhaustion and relaxation, wasted away and emaciated, a living corpse, the sufferer is awaiting the stroke of death, while those around, breaking all connection between him and life, are employed in taking off and dividing his clothes. The *prayer*, which, after that the last basis has been given to it in this representation, (God *cannot* forsake, ver. 1—10, he *would* forsake, if he did not help now, ver. 12—18) breaks out in an expanded form in ver. 19—21, passes on, at its conclusion, to the *confident assurance* of an answer, which can never fail to be granted, when prayer rises on such a solid foundation.

In the last part (from ver. 22—31,) the sufferer depicts the happy consequences of his deliverance, which he anticipates in faith, and lifted up in spirit above the present, beholds, as if it were present. These truly great consequences will extend to all without distinction. First, the greatest of all distinctions, that between Israel and the heathen, will, in reference to these, be abolished. Among Israel this manifestation of the glory of God, in the deliverance of his servant will greatly strengthen faith, and will fill all believers with adoring wonder at such a God, and with animation and joy: their heart will live for ever through this great proof of the life of their God. The heathen, ver. 27, 28, from the one end of the earth to the other, as they seriously ponder this glorious manifestation of Jehovah, will turn to him with adoring hearts, as the only true God, so that he who is the king of the earth will be recognised as such over it all. In the next place the distinctions of individual circumstances also, will be removed; rich and poor, high and low, happy and miserable, will take part in blessing this publication, and with devout feelings will thank him for it. Finally, in ver. 30 and 31, the distinctions of time

will be removed:—not only at present but also throughout the distant future, will the praise and the worship of God be extended through this manifestation of his righteousness and faithfulness.

The Psalm naturally divides itself into three strophes, each containing a distinct subject of its own, of the same length, and consisting of ten verses, ver. 1—10, ver. 12—21, ver. 22—31. Between the first and second strophe a verse is thrown in, which, connecting the two together, leads on from the one to the other. De Wette and Koester's division into strophes of five lines cannot be continued throughout, without breaking the connection. The three and the ten play a conspicuous part in several of the Psalms of David. Compare, for example, the 18th Psalm.

David is named in the title as the author of the Psalm, and even De Wette is obliged to concede that nothing decisive can be urged against this view.

Hitzig would have Jeremiah acknowledged as the author of the Psalm, but the grounds of his opinion are not such as to call for a formal refutation. "The somewhat copious and flowing style of Jeremiah" is more or less common to him with all who are in deep distress, and with those who speak from the souls of such. The entire originality of our Psalm does not at all correspond to Jeremiah's style. There are no characteristic passages in which Jeremiah agrees with our Psalm, and though there were, it would not be sufficient to prove the point. It would merely indicate that Jeremiah, according to his usual practice, had borrowed from the older Scriptures.

The determination of the subject is a much more difficult point than the determination of the author of the Psalm. Many, going on the supposition that whoever is brought forward as speaking can be no other than the author, have assumed that David is the sufferer of the Psalm. Against this idea there are many insuperable objections drawn from the first part. David never was in such great trouble as is here described; his enemies never parted his clothes, or cast lots upon his vesture; even in the greatest heat of the conflict with Saul, to which alone we can look, he never was in that state of exhaustion, weakness, and emaciation, which meets us in the subject of this Psalm. In addition to this, we must observe, that while in the picture of the sufferings, there is much which cannot correspond to David, we do not meet on the other hand with one single expression,

by which we could single out any circumstance in David's history, to which he could refer this prayer. This hypothesis, moreover, appears completely untenable, when we look at the second part. Such consequences as are there spoken of—among others, the conversion of all the nations of the whole earth to the true God, and the fulfilment of the great promise made to the Patriarchs—David could not possibly expect to flow from his deliverance.

The objections urged against David apply with equal force against any other Israelitish individual—against Hezekiah, according to Jahn, and Jeremiah, according to Hitzig—suppositions which are, moreover, rendered untenable by the words of the title.

That the reference of this Psalm to David, or to any other member of the Jewish nation, is untenable, appears from the efforts made by all who maintain it by an arbitrary interpretation to get quit of the matters of fact referred to in the Psalm. What havoc, for example, must Hoffman make (Prophecy and its Fulfilment, Part I. p. 156) to uphold his hypothesis, according to which the Psalm refers to David, in the circumstances narrated at 1 Sam. xxiii. 25, 26. In the first part there is contained, according to him, in strange medley, matters of fact, and matters of imagination, distinguished from each other by no rule, except as they best suit the convenience of the maintainer of this hypothesis. In the first strophe, the first and second verses contain matters of fact, the seventh and eighth matters of fancy: "how they will insult the prisoner, and mock at his trust in God." In the second part, from verse 12 to verse 15, the subject-matter is historical; from verse 16 to verse 18, the circumstances are hypothetical: (which, however, will not correspond to the supposed condition); "he sees, now that he is in their possession, how they will rejoice over his wasted body, and after he is dead, will part and cast lots for his clothes,"—a very singular way, assuredly, of determining the situation. One, according to it, would need to have a very free hand, and to have a peculiar taste for following every sudden idea. In the second part, the conversion of the heathen is violently separated from its cause and occasion: *the time will come when the people will again think upon Jehovah, and turn to him.* The whole passage, from v. 26 to v. 31, will merely show: *what a God he must be who has listened to such a prayer, and to whom such praise will be rendered.* Against this the last verse is quite sufficient:—

they shall know his righteousness, and that he hath done this. At the expression, " they eat," v. 29, there will have to be supplied " the good things of life,"—sufficiently arbitrarily; for the object to be eaten must be determined from the preceding context.

Other attempts to set aside the actual condition by exposition, I have already adverted to in my Christology. Among these we reckon the assertion, which, after the example of Venema, has been brought forward in several shapes, that the sufferer in the Psalm is not in the power of his enemies, but only threatened by them. The passages which are brought forward for the purpose, viz. 11, 12, 20, 21, do not prove it: for the nearness of the trouble in ver. 11, is not at all in opposition to its presence, but in opposition to its distance. Trouble is near to him who is in the midst of it. The expression: *many bulls have compassed me*, &c. corresponds to a victim which has been seized, and, to cut off every hope of escape, has been surrounded by ferocious enemies, for the purpose of inflicting the death stroke, and the 20th and 21st verses only show, what of itself is obvious, that this has not yet been inflicted. The 17th and 18th verses speak a contrary language:—his enemies have stripped the sufferer quite naked, so that his emaciation lies exposed both to his own eyes and to theirs, while they are enjoying the miserable spectacle, and dividing his clothes among themselves. To refer, with Rosenmüller and others, the 18th verse merely to the *proposal* to divide the clothes, will not do, irrespective of every other consideration, on account of the connection with the 17th verse, where the sufferer is represented as already stripped naked. Those who propose to understand the 18th verse as figurative, appear to be at a loss what to say in their embarrassment.

The hypothesis of Jarchi, Kimchi, and others, is much more tolerable, viz. that by the sufferer we are to understand the people, or the pious part of the same. It is afterwards admitted that this hypothesis, and in a certain measure also, the one which refers the Psalm to David, has truth for its foundation. But if we apply the Psalm to the people *directly* and *exclusively*, we shall meet with insuperable difficulties. On the supposition that the sufferer is the whole people, it will clearly be necessary to understand that by the troop of evil-doers, the dogs, the liars, and the bulls, the *heathen* are especially and exclusively meant, for which idea the Psalm does not furnish one single particle of

evidence. The opposition everywhere, is between *wickedness* and *uprightness:* and it is quite arbitrary here, as in all similar cases which are so frequent in the Psalms, to turn a purely moral into a national distinction. Farther, if we suppose the whole people, or the pious part of the same, to be the sufferer, how could he say he would make known the name of the Lord among his *brethren*, that he would praise him in the midst of the congregation, that from him would go forth his praise in the great assembly, that he would pay his vows before them that fear him? How could he exhort the fearers of God, the whole seed of Jacob, the whole seed of Israel, to whom he had placed himself in opposition, to praise the Lord for what had happened to him? How could he promise to the meek, to those *who seek the Lord*, nothing more than sympathy in a salvation which concerned himself peculiarly, and nothing more than strengthening of their faith from the same? The whole passage, from 22d to 26th verse, is on that hypothesis, altogether inconceivable: it is fatal to every view which removes the contents of the Psalm entirely from the domain of individual application. Such views also are contradicted by the strong prominence given throughout the Psalm to what specially belongs to an individual person: the sufferer speaks of his mouth, his heart, his tongue, his skin, his hands, his feet, &c.—a form of speech which can lose its proper application only when well defined marks show that the term employed is a collective one.

The view which has always obtained throughout the Christian church, is, that which interprets the Psalm directly and exclusively to *Christ.* The author by no means regrets that he adopted this view in the Christology. It was the easiest and the most natural of those which were then before the world, to which his attention was more immediately directed; and he would not even now hesitate for one moment to adopt it, were he limited to making a choice among these, as he supposed he was,—having as yet advanced but a little way on an independent footing into the depths of the Old Testament. In addition to the views already mentioned, there was still another, held by Calvin, Melancthon, Amyrald, and others, and advocated in modern times by Steir and Umbreit,—the typical-Messianic. David, it is maintained, according to this hypothesis, in fleeing to the Lord on the ground of a particular case of distress, transfers, elevated by the spirit of Messianic prophecy, his own being

into the extreme sufferings of the hoped-for Messiah, and speaks as the present type of the coming deliverer. Although the author acknowledges that in this attempt justice is done to those considerations which may be pleaded in favour of opposing expositions, yet he cannot but regard it as an unsuccessfu attempt at reconciliation. Such a view of the way in which the Psalm was produced appears to him as psychologically altogether inconceivable. How David could extend his own consciousness to that of his offspring, cannot be conceived, without confusion of the life of souls, and destruction of personal identity.

Meantime, the direct and exclusive reference of the Psalm to Christ, presents such difficulties, that one cannot feel at perfect liberty in adopting it, but feels rather inclined to look round for some other interpretation, which may satisfy the mind. We cannot, without violence, suppose the Messiah to be introduced speaking, without one single expression specialising his person, —compare, for example, our remarks on the 16th Psalm. The Psalm, moreover, is so nearly related to a number of others, which have the sufferings of the *righteous one* generally, for their subject, that it appears very difficult to break its connection with them, and to isolate it too much. Finally, while what is said, in the second part, of the consequences of the deliverance of the sufferer, is indeed by far too magnificent to allow of its application to any one Israelitish individual, and far too personal to allow of its application directly and exclusively to the people, the mind cannot, on the other hand, reconcile itself to set aside all other realizations of the idea, *that nothing will more promote the glory of God, that nothing will more powerfully tend to awaken and draw on the spirits of men to serve him, than the deliverance of suffering righteousness,* whether as regards the experience of individuals, or that of the church at large, and to confine the idea entirely to Christ. The mighty influence, for example, which the very wonderful deliverance of David from the hand of Saul must have had in quickening the fear of God, the events also which are recorded in Exodus xviii. 19, "And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians: and Jethro said, blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians: now know I that the Lord is greater than all gods:"—in 2 Chron. xxxii. 23, "And many

(after the Lord had glorified himself in the deliverance of righteous Hezekiah from his enemies,) brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations henceforth," and those in Daniel iii. 28, come so obviously within the domain of the second part, that one can scarcely rest satisfied with any interpretation which places them altogether out of connection with it.

While all existing interpretations are thus encumbered with serious difficulties, we make our escape at once, and completely, from the region of embarrassment and constraint, if we consider the Psalm as referring to the *ideal person of the Righteous One*, —a character which is introduced more frequently throughout the Psalms than any other, so that nothing but ignorance can object to this interpretation, that it is an arbitrary one. In this interpretation, justice is done to that truth which lies at the foundation of every one of the existing views, while, at the same time, the difficulties which stand in the way of every one of these are avoided. The exposition may be thus stated: David composed this poem for the use of the church, like most of his other productions, on the ground-work of his own experience, which, in this respect, had, from the beginning, been so peculiarly rich. How the righteous man in this world of sin must suffer much, and how the Lord, when it comes to the last extremity, gloriously delivers him, and how his sufferings, through the manifestation of the Divine glory in his deliverance and in his victory over an ungodly world, subserve the honour of God, and the sanctifying of his name, and accelerate the approach of his kingdom—this is the theme. *Every particular righteous man* might appropriate to himself the consolation of this Psalm, might expect, in his own experience, the realization of the hopes expressed in it, in so far as the reality in him corresponded to the idea,—in so far as he embodied in his own person the ideal righteous man. In like manner also might the community of the righteous, the people of the covenant, in all public troubles, draw from it comfort,—the confident assurance that the extremity of trouble must at the same time be the turning-point, and that the seed of tears must usher in a rich harvest in the way of advancing the kingdom of God. With all this the Psalm retained, till the coming of Christ, in all, and throughout, the character of an unfulfilled prophecy. Accord-

ing to the proportion of righteousness was the proportion of deliverance, and of the blessed results upon the kingdom of God. Every previous fulfilment pointed forward to a perfect one yet to come. By those in whom hope in the Messiah was in all circumstances a living one, this could be expected only in him. The most perfect righteousness belongs so necessarily to the idea of the Messiah, that he cannot be present to the mind without the most distinct recognition of it. Now, in this Psalm we find righteousness represented as necessarily connected with the severest and deepest suffering, springing out of the natural enmity of the ungodly world. Consequently, the inference is clear that the Messiah, if a righteous, must also be a suffering one. And, further, as here we find bound together suffering righteousness and such exalted deliverance, we infer that this salvation in the highest and fullest sense must be the lot of him who should be the first to realise in perfection the idea of suffering righteousness. Lastly, as the glory of God will be in proportion to the salvation vouchsafed, it must be in the time of the Messiah that this will for the first time appear in all its extent aud depth, as here described.

That, according to this view, justice is done to all the references which occur in the New Testament to our Psalm, (compare Matth. xxvii. 39, 43, 46; Mark xv. 34; John xix. 24; Heb. ii. 11, 12; and on the passage, the Christology, page 176, &c., and besides also Matth. xxviii. 10, and John xx. 17, where our Saviour, after his resurrection, in marked reference to verse 22, calls his disciples his brethren,) is clear as day, and becomes particularly obvious, when we direct our attention to the other quotations from the Psalms in the history of our Saviour's sufferings. Not one of them refers to a Psalm which directly and exclusively is of a Messianic import. The 69th Psalm, which, next to the one now under consideration, is the most remarkable, contains features which will not apply to Christ,—(the strong prominence, for example, given to the *sin* of the sufferer) and which exclude the idea that our Lord and his apostles have given it a direct and exclusive Messianic interpretation. Still, it is necessary to observe, that the providence of God so directed the circumstances, that the inward conformity of the sufferer of our Psalm to Christ should be outwardly visible. The Psalm would have been fulfilled in Christ, even although the passers by had not shaken the head or the mockers quoted its very words; even although there

had been no dividing of his garments or casting lots upon his vestures. But the striking resemblance in these particular circumstances must be considered as an index pointing out a resemblance of an inward character. The same object subserved by this secret guidance of Divine providence, Christ also had in view, when he borrowed, in his first exclamation on the cross, the opening words of the Psalm, and referred in his last expression, to its closing sentence, thereby impressively intimating, that the whole Psalm was now in the way of being fulfilled.

The question may very naturally be asked, what is it that has brought such honour to our Psalm, (which even Strauss, though without any good intention, has signalised by calling it the *programme of the crucifixion of Christ*) what is it that has led to its being exalted above so many similar Psalms by which it is surrounded,—Psalms which, while they celebrate the contest of the righteous in this world of sin, and the deliverance which the Lord vouchsafes to them, are also indirectly prophecies of Christ, inasmuch as he was foretold by every suffering that fell to the lot of a righteous man because of his righteousness, and by every deliverance which a righteous man obtained because of his righteousness? To this question a threefold answer may be given. First, as has been suggested by Umbreit:—Among the many Psalms which speak of the persecutions of the righteous by their enemies, there is not one other Psalm which so expressively and powerfully collects together, and concentrates on one individual figure the accumulated pains and tortures of the sufferers in the contest with an ungodly world. Second, those Psalms which originally refer to one particular individual sufferer, stand one degree more remote from direct application to the Messiah, than this one, which needs no preceding development of its idea in the history of any one individual. In like manner, the reference to the Messiah is less prominent in those Psalms in which the righteous man is introduced speaking in reference to his own failings and weaknesses. Of these no mention whatever is made in this Psalm. Lastly, in no Psalm are the consequences which flow from the deliverance of the righteous man painted in such prominent and comprehensive colours as they are here.

Title. To the chief musician—on the hind of the morning—a Psalm of David. The expression, על אילת השחר has been very variously interpreted. The simple remark, however, that

אַיָּלָה, wherever it occurs, always signifies a *hind*, and that it would be perfectly arbitrary to give it any other interpretation here, so decidedly sets aside a whole host of expositions, that it is unnecessary even to quote them. The interpretation of שַׁחַר is in like manner ascertained: all expositions which would not translate it by *the morning*, must at once be thrown aside. Those, now, who keep by the ascertained sense of the words, are generally of opinion that these words are either the beginning of a song, or a passage from one, the tune appropriate to which is to be sung to this Psalm: like, "The hind of the morning." These again are divided, as to whether the expression must be understood as denoting a proper hind, or (according to Gesenius in the Thes.) as the poetical phrase for the rising sun. This last interpretation is without any analogy in the Hebrew language, and has very insufficient ground to rest on,—the application of the figurative term, roe, in the Arabic poets, to the rising sun, and the practice of the Talmud, which, however, is not unconnected with the passage before us, but obviously flows from it. This whole exposition, however, has this against it, that there is not one single ascertained case, in which a poem is quoted in the title, the appropriate tune of which is to be sung to the Psalm. Only in a case of utmost necessity, therefore, could we come to the resolution of adopting such an interpretation. Especially, before adopting it, would it be necessary for us to investigate whether it be not possible to interpret the words as indicative of the *object* of the Psalm. On a close examination of similar dark and enigmatical superscriptions, especially of such as are introduced with עַל, it always appears that they demand such an interpretation. More especially in those Psalms of which David is the author, such a reference is one which might *a priori* be expected, as David was particularly fond of indicating, by such enigmatical superscriptions, the contents and object of his Psalms. It will be very readily admitted that the *hind* is a very appropriate emblem of the suffering and persecuted righteous man who is the object of the Psalm before us. On the one hand, the stag, or the hind, and the roe, are frequently employed as emblematical of one persecuted or put to death. For example, 2 Sam. i. 19, David himself says of Jonathan, "the roe, O Israel, is slain in the high places;"—on which clause Michaelis makes the following remark, "comparatur Jonathan cum caprea a venatoribus confossa:" Prov. vi. 5, "deliver thyself as a roe

from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler," Isaiah xiii. 14. And, on the other hand, the hind and the roe are used as emblems of loveliness, Genesis xlix. 21, Prov. v. 19, Song of Solomon ii. 7, 9, viii. 14, and by the Arabians as emblems of innocence, especially on the part of the persecuted. In Meidani (Freytag. Th. 1, N. 148,) there occurs the proverb, eum invadat malum, non dorcadem," *him—not an innocent or a righteous person:* and Ferazadak (in Freytag on the passage) says, on receiving intelligence of the death of one of his enemies: " dico ei, cum mors mihi nunciata esset: ei non dorcadi albæ in arenarum tumulo (accidat)." There is the less reason for hesitating as to this interpretation, if we remember that David, in other places, draws from the animal creation emblems of the sufferers and the persecuted: 1 Sam. xxvii. 20, " The king of Israel is come out to hunt a flea, as when one doth hunt a patridge on the mountains;" xxiv. 15. After whom is the king of Israel come out? After whom doest thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea? and, in the title to the 56th Psalm, " on the dumb dove of those afar off," which bears a remarkable analogy to the passage before us. The reasons already adduced show, that it is at least exceedingly probable that the hind may be a figurative expression significant of suffering innocence. And it is put beyond a doubt by the fact, that the wicked and the persecutors in this Psalm, *whose peculiar physiognomy is marked by emblems drawn from the brute creation*, are designated by the terms dogs, lions, bulls, and buffaloes. In the title of such a Psalm, we might, *a priori*, expect to find such an appellation of the sufferer as should correspond to that of the persecutors, especially as no such appellation occurs in the body of the Psalm. A special argument in favour of this interpretation is furnished by the term אילותי, my strength, ver. 19, a word which occurs nowhere else in Scripture, and which seems to have been formed for the sake of the allusion to the title. The אילה, (hind) has the name of strength, but the substance it has not:—a creature without strength, it is the natural prey of dogs, lions, buffaloes. But the strength which it has not in itself it has in the Lord, who must hasten to the help of the weak. On every other interpretation, the reference of אילות to אילת, which is so manifest, remains unexplained. Finally, this relation shows at the same time, that the title came from the pen of the author of the Psalm, and goes far to establish the originality generally of the

titles. We are led to the same result by the manifest connection between אילת, and the expression אלי, אלי, properly, my *Strong One,* at the very opening of the Psalm, and also by the circumstance that the symbolical designation of the sufferer in the title exactly corresponds to those of his enemies in the Psalm itself. All these references are so strong and significant, that they must have proceeded from the author himself. Hitherto we have been discussing only the term "hind," and have left its adjunct, "morning," out of sight. The generality of those who consider the title as indicating the contents of the Psalm, trace the connection, which the hind has with the morning, *to its being early hunted.* But this reference is too remote to admit of its being intended by such a short expression. The only legitimate exposition is that which is grounded on the general figurative use of the morning. That the morning is used in a figurative sense, we are entitled to expect from the analogy of the hind. Now, the common idea conveyed by the figurative use of the morning, is that of "prosperity coming after misfortunes." Hence in Isaiah lviii. 8, "then shall thy light break forth as the morning," 10, "then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day:" Isaiah xlvii. 11, "there shall evil come upon thee, the morning whereof thou shalt not know:" viii. 20. Hos. vi. 3; x. 15. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. The expression will thus indicate the prosperous termination of the sufferer's condition: *the suffering righteous man to whom salvation is imparted,*—a title, as suitable, as exactly corresponding to the contents, as can well be conceived. The fact so carefully brought forward by the Evangelists, that Christ rose at the day-dawn,—a circumstance by no means unimportant,—points to the "of the morning."

The first division of the first part begins, in the 1 and 2 verses, with the complaining question, and the interrogative complaint, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In urging this complaint, it is shown first, ver. 3—8, that God is acting towards the sufferer, whom he is giving over to destruction, in a very different manner from the way in which he had manifested himself, in all time past, in the experience of his people; and then, ver. 9 and 10, that God is as really the God of the sufferer as he had been theirs. To this detail the prayer is next appended, ver. 11, that God would remove the anomaly thus demonstrated

to exist, that he would not be far from the sufferer, that he would not forsake him.

Ver. 1. *My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me, far from my deliverance, far from the words of my groaning.* In the first clause every thing depends upon defining the idea of *forsaking*. This term can here signify nothing less than an entire and complete giving up. For the trial continues complete till the close, when God reveals to the sufferer that his sufferings shall have an end. As soon as he can say, thou hast heard me, he sees that every thing is right. The trial also does not consist in temporary suffering, considered as such—this the sufferer knows that he must lay his account with—but in the supposition that he has been given up by God altogether, and for ever. Hence therefore the cry, "thou hast forsaken me," does not refer to a *real fact*, but it depends upon *a conclusion* which the sufferer draws from his apparently thoroughly desperate condition, and upon *the feeling of his flesh*, which cries, that now, when there is but a hair between him and death, every thing is utterly lost. To get free from this conclusion and this feeling, is the point of difficulty with which the sufferer has to contend. After he has honestly done his part, and laid hold of those truths, which render the forsaking altogether impossible, he receives from God the only answer which can be given to his complaint, "why hast thou forsaken me?" "I have not forsaken thee, in spite of appearance and feeling." From this exposition, it is evident that these words, so far from being expressive of despair, are much rather to be regarded as counteracting despair—as tearing it up by the roots when it is like to steal over us. From it also, it is evident that the assertion of the Berleb. Bible, that these words are strictly suitable only in the lips of Christ, is altogether erroneous. "Among us," it is there said, "no man may, in his suffering, ask God why hast thou sent this or that affliction? for we will at all times find sufficient reason why we have deserved this, and much more. All that a suffering man can say is, *O my God forsake me not.*" The sufferer before us, does not ask why God, in general, allows him to suffer, but why he has *forsaken* him. To this *why*, every one has a right, who can, in truth, call God his God, notwithstanding his manifold failings. For "God has forsaken no one who trusts in him at all times," and God *can forsake no such one*. In short, the expression, *forsake me not*, which alone it would

appear is suitable, is not essentially different from the exclamation, *why hast thou forsaken me,* and must rest on precisely the same ground. He only who can ask God, "*wherefore* hast thou forsaken me," can pray with confident assurance, "forsake me not." —The previous appellation, *My God, my God,* contains the ground of the *wherefore,* the right to put such a question. He who cannot call God his God, he, who is without the covenant and without the promises, he, who has obtained no pledges of the grace of God, inasmuch as for him to be forsaken is altogether in order, has no ground to implore of God, that he would show by the result that it is with him altogether a matter of appearance and feeling. Nay more, the greater the right is which any one has to call God his God, the greater is the confidence and decision with which he can utter the *why.* Thus it is evident that the complete right to the *why* is reserved for one—for Christ—who, in the full sense, can call God his God, while a sufficient right belongs also to all believers. The expressive repetition of the expression *My God,* shows how firmly the sufferer clings to this his only ground of hope, how thoroughly conscious he is that it is here that he is to find an antidote to despair, that it is from this point that there must go forth a reaction against present appearances. The expression, *My God,* occurring three times here and in verse 2, is assuredly not accidental.—The following remarks are Luther's, "Wherefore, let us shut up these words in our hearts, and let us keep them carefully there, till the time comes when we shall really need them. Whoever cannot comprehend them, let him remain with the people on the plain, in the field below, and allow the disciples to go to Christ to the mountain. Luke vi. 12, 17. For all the sayings of this Psalm are not enunciated for each and every man, for all have not the same gifts, and all have not the same sufferings. The Scriptures, according to the circumstances of individuals, have milk for sucklings, and wine and food for the strong, so that there is consolation not only for the weak, but also for the strong and for those who are enduring great sufferings."—The second clause most interpreters, after the example of the Septuagint and Luther, (*I cry, but my help is far*) translate; "far from my deliverance are the words of my lamentation:" there is a great gulf between the cry for help, and the help itself, which, now *that matters are at the very last extremity with the sufferer*—now that he stands with one foot in

the grave,—ought to stand in close contact with each other. Others translate: "far from my help, from the words of my lamentation." This translation is undoubtedly to be preferred. Were we to refer רחוק to דברי, the plural would be required, and what is still more decisive, the reference of the רחוק to God is rendered necessary by the expression אל תרחק in the 11th and 19th verses. The cry in these verses, "be not far," grows out of the address *here* "thou art far," after that the impossibility of his continuing longer in existence had been shown. God is far from the deliverance which he does not work out, and from the complaint which he does not hear. This is all the more painful that the time for deliverance is just expiring, and that the man from whom the complaint proceeds, is at the very gates of death, so that not to help now—not to hear now—appears to be to give up altogether. It is impossible, however, to adopt the view of most of those who follow this exposition, and translate, "thou art far." This would require the pronoun to be repeated: רחוק is in apposition to the pronoun in עזבתני. The term שאגה signifies primarily, "roaring," or "bellowing," and, secondarily, "loud complaining."

Ver. 2. *My God, I cry in the day time, and thou answerest not, and in the night time, and I am not silenced.* In reality, the "why" is to be supplied here also. To be able to call God his God, and, in extreme distress, to cry continually without being heard, is a striking contradiction, which imperiously calls for removal by God at length hearing. The last words are translated by many, *and I have no rest.* But the term דומיה always signifies silence, and this translation is particularly necessary here, in consequence of the opposition between the term and the "cry" of the first clause. The sufferer can be silent when his cry finds an answer, when he gets assurance of being heard and helped: so that thus *I am not silenced* is exactly parallel to *thou answerest not.*

Ver. 3. *And thou art holy, sitting enthroned on Israel's praise.* There is no reason for substituting *yet* in room of the simple and ascertained *and.* The contrast between the supposed reality and the idea—between the apparent personal and the general experience—is not here indicated in relation to the first and second verses, but is drawn for the first time in ver. 6—8 in relation to the contents of ver. 3—5. The import is: that I may lay down a more extensive basis on which I rest my right to utter the complaint,

"why hast thou forsaken me,"—*Thou art holy, and hast always taken an interest in thine own people, hast never forsaken any one of them, but I appear to be altogether forsaken by thee. For thou takest no interest in me, although I am now sunk to the very depth of misery.*—The idea of holiness in Scripture, embraces in it the idea meant to be conveyed by theologians when they use the term; viz. "the highest purity in God demanding the same purity on the part of the creature." This is evident: "Be ye holy, for I am holy," and Isa. vi. 5, where the thrice repeated "holy" of the seraphims awakens in the prophet a consciousness of his own impurity. But the two ideas are by no means identical: the scriptural one is much more comprehensive than the other. Holiness in the Scriptures comprehends majesty, as well as holiness in the limited sense. God is holy, in as much as he is separated from every created and finite being, and lifted above them, particularly above *sin*, which can establish its seat only within the domain of finite beings. The opinion of Gesenius (Thes.) and of Nitzch, (Sys. 77) who would identify the scriptural with the theological sense, is negatived by that passage, the sixth chapter of Isaiah, where the Divine holiness is placed in peculiar contrast to human sinfulness, and where, at the same time, the thrice repeated cry of "holy" is immediately followed up by the expression, as if intended to develope its import, "the whole earth is full of his glory:" and is accompanied by the description of the prophet, "seated on a throne, high and lifted up," and "mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord, the Lord of hosts." In like manner also, we have in Isa. lvii. 15, the holiness of God placed in juxtaposition with "high," and "lifted up," and in contrast to, "of a contrite and humble spirit," "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." In Isaiah xl. 25, and 26, we find the "holiness" of God mingled up with his power, as displayed in the creation of the world, in a way which would be utterly unintelligible in the theological sense: "to whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One: lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things:" to whom will ye compare me, who am lifted up above all created and finito beings, as their Creator, from whom I am separated. In Hab. iii. 3, the holiness of God stands in connection with his glory and his praise. "God came from Teman,

and the Holy One from Mount Paran: his glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise." In the 99th Psalm, the holiness of God, into which his whole praise is resolved, separates him not only from sin, but from everything earthly and human. In the third verse, it is parallel to: "great and terrible." (נורא). With the latter of these terms it stands also in intimate connection in Ps. cxi. 9, "holy and reverend (נורא) is his name." The signification of purity then, so far from being the only one of קדוש, cannot be considered even as the fundamental one. Nothing can be said in favour of this, for the remarks made by Gesenius, for the purpose of proving that the fundamental idea of קדוש, is that of physical purity, depend upon a mistaken view of the symbolical character of the precepts, in reference to the outward purity required by the law:—and that the idea implied in קדוש in such passages, is that of holiness, and not that of outward purity, is evident simply from the motive appended to the exhortation, "be ye holy, for God is holy." On the other hand, the position for which we are arguing, is confirmed by the circumstance, that קדוש is much more frequently used in reference to the distance generally between God and all created beings, than to the distance specially between him and sin,—a circumstance which does not admit of explanation, on the supposition that the theological sense is the fundamental one.—In so far as the term is used in reference to God, these explanations are altogether to be rejected which imply the idea of God separating himself from all other nations, and consecrating himself as the God of Israel, or (Menken and Stier,) as one who lets himself down in self-denying love.—Even in the passage before us, קדוש stands in opposition, not only to what is sinful, but also generally to whatever belongs to the creation, to the earth, to the human family. It indicates that, in reference to God, every thought of inability or unwillingness, where he has promised, must be excluded as proceeding from unfaithfulness. God has always manifested himself as holy, inasmuch as he has delivered his people through the mighty deeds of his right hand, has maintained his covenant, and has gloriously fulfilled his promises. He shines like a clear bright sun, unsullied by the spots of weakness or falsehood upon the human race, which is wholly covered over with these spots, and presents points of light only where it is illuminated by this sun. That the holiness of God here undoubtedly comprehends his truth, is

obvious from the term, "his righteousness," in the 31st verse.—In the second clause, the praise-songs of Israel come into notice, in so far as God, from the proofs which he has given as to his being the Holy One, has given ample occasion to praise him. There is, in all probability, an allusion to the frequent expression, יושב הכרובים; at least the resemblance between the two indicates that the praises of Israel are here to be regarded as the throne, the seat of honour, of God: *enthroned on the praise-songs.* The exposition of De Wette is unsuitable: "Inhabitant of the praises." ישב does not signify to inhabit, but only to sit upon, to be enthroned on, to dwell on. Gesenius regards יושב as used in a transitive sense—and dwelling among the praise-songs of Israel, viz. in the temple in which the praises of Israel are heard. But יושב is never construed with an accusative. Of the three passages which Gesenius adduces for this construction, in the first, Gen. iv. 20, it is not admissible, and in the other two, Is. xlii. 11 and xliv. 13, it is not necessary.

Ver. 4. *Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou deliveredst them.* Ver. 5. *They cried to thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not put to shame.* Luther remarks: "These words look very like as if they were spoken out of envy and vehement indignation against God. For although he is the same God, yet he has heard and delivered the fathers who have hoped in him and cried to him, but from this sufferer here, who also hopes and cries, he turns away and forsakes him. For it is really a hard matter, and one which tempts a person sorely to despair and to blaspheme, that the same God should act differently towards one from what he does to another, without any fault on his part. Whoever has been engaged in such a contest has felt this unutterable distress in his mind." Assuredly the pain of the sufferer must be greatly augmented by the singularity of his condition, provided he had decidedly concluded that he was entirely forsaken. But this is not the case with our sufferer. Although appearances, and his own feelings, say that he is forsaken, yet, even from the beginning, faith is in the back-ground, and by and by it gains a complete victory over sight and sense. What at the first glance strengthens the complaint, becomes, when more deeply pondered, the transition to hope: for whoever is fully persuaded that God has at all times, and without any exception, manifested himself as the Holy One, the deliverer of his people, cannot but come gradually to know that there must

be a mistake as to the assumed single exception. The expression, "thou art the Holy One," is a corroding element, which must by and by entirely consume the other, "Thou hast forsaken me."—The deeds of the Lord, to which the speaker refers, are peculiarly those which took place when the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, and were put in possession of the promised land. The expression *our fathers*, of which the natural counterpart is, "we, their posterity, thy present people," would seem to lead to the conclusion, that the speaker is not an individual but a personified community. At least, in all similar passages, it is not an individual, but the church of God, that is introduced complaining of the difference between the present and the past, praying for its removal, and grounding hope for the future on the early deliverances vouchsafed by the Lord to his people: compare, for example, Ps. xliv. 2: "O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us what thou hast done in their days, in the days of old," and also Ps. lxxviii. 12, &c.; Is. lxiii. 7; Hab. iii. 1. Still the reference to the community of the righteous is designedly of the most indistinct character, in order that the single suffering righteous man may appropriate to himself the contents of these verses. The repetition of בטחו in the second clause of the 4th verse, is intended to bind together, as inseparably as possible, the *trust* and the *deliverance*, with the view of showing that there is the most intimate connection between them: the trust is *always* succeeded by the deliverance. The occurrence of the expression *three times* is assuredly not accidental.—Stier refers ברשו to the being ashamed before the world, to the reproach of the ungodly, which is more painful than any disappointment of one's own. But there is no reason for making this special reference, for בוש is constantly used in the sense of to be ashamed, to be disappointed of one's hope.

Ver. 6. *But I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and one despised of the people.* All that is brought forward in this and the two following verses, appears evidently designed to produce the impression that the sufferer is entirely forsaken by God; and it is only in this view, that it is here brought forward. It is not suffering generally, but the deepest and apparently irremediable depth of suffering that is placed in opposition to the deliverance of the fathers. The term ואנכי is expressive of very emphatic contrast—it is altogether otherwise

with me, I am a worm, &c. Man is compared to a worm in Job xxv. 6, on account of the nothingness of his existence. The worm, in the passage before us, as in Isa. xli. 13, is indicative of nothingness within, as well as nothingness without: "fear not, thou worm Jacob." The passage, 1 Samuel xxv. 15, is analogous, where David describes himself as a dead dog or as a flea. To the clause, *and no man*, corresponds חֲדַל אִישִׁים in Isa. liii. 3, properly ceasing from among men, no longer belonging to them. The term *a reproach of men*, properly *of the human race*, indicates that the domain of the reproach is so extensive, that the whole human race may be said to reproach. One despised of the people, is one despised by the people. The people stands in opposition to one individual. The reproach is not that of an individual, it is of a popular character. The reproach and the contempt are brought under our notice, not so much in themselves, as in reference to the ground on which they rest,—the deep misery of the sufferer, whose condition is such that it is reckoned by all men as altogether desperate.

Ver. 7. *All who see me laugh me to scorn: they open wide the lips, they shake the head.* The ב in בשפה indicates that the lip is the instrument of the opening. A parallel passage Ps. xxxv. 21, "they open their mouth wide against me," and Job xvi. 10. Instead of "they shake the head," the later commentators, after the example of Lackemacher, whose renderings are always somewhat suspicious, have, "they nod the head," adducing as the reason, that it is not the shaking of the head, which is a gesture of denial, that is here suitable, but the nodding of the head, which is a gesture of assent, and in regard to the sufferer a gesture of satisfaction. But this exposition is etymologically inadmissible: the word דָּנִיעַ is altogether identical with our shake (schütteln), and to shake the head is exactly the import of הניע ראש, the phrase which occurs always in a similar connection, and also of κινεῖν τὴν κεφαλήν of the Septuagint and of Matthew. And the reason above adduced for departing from the only correct rendering in an etymological point of view, is at once set aside by the remark, that the denial does not here refer to the suffering, but to the existence of the sufferer. This they deny him on the ground of his irremediable misery. The idea is this: they shake the head, in connection especially with what follows, where they announce his condition to be completely desperate, and him to be wholly forsaken of God. This con-

nection is all the more significant, that the following expression from the omission of the לאמר, clearly indicates itself to be a mere commentary on the gesture: after the pantomine of *it is all over with him*, there follows the verbal utterance.

Ver. 8. "'*Devolve upon the Lord,' (he has said,) Now let him rescue him, let him deliver him, since he has delight in him.*" The reproach and contempt grounded on the great depth of the sufferer's misery, and illustrative of it,—the whole world has given him over for lost,—we have intimated to us in general in ver. 6th; in ver. 7th, we have its expression by gestures, and in the verse before us, in words. How sure the mockers are of the destruction of the sufferer,—how completely impossible it appears to them that God should deliver him,—is evident in the clearest manner from this, that they express, in the form of a wish, what, if it should really happen, would be fatal to them in the highest degree. Had they entertained a single thought of deliverance, they never would have uttered the expression, "let him deliver him." גל is, according to several, an infinitive. Some understand it as used in the sense of an imperative—*let him trust in the Lord.* But this is inadmissible, for, in such a case, the absolute form גָּלוֹל must have been used: compare Ew. Sm. Gr. 355, 56. The infinitive, moreover, is not simply and everywhere used for the imperative; and there is no reason here for the substitution. Finally, *let him commit*, is altogether unsuitable to the connection; for גל אל יהוה must correspond to חפץ בן, and can therefore refer only to the relation in which the sufferer has hitherto stood to God, not to that in which he is now to stand. According to others, the infinitive is used instead of the preterite tense. But in this case also, the absolute form would be necessary: moreover, the infinitive cannot be used generally for the preterite, but only in certain cases, (see Ew. 355,) of which the passage before us is not one. Those who, in consequence of these difficulties, give up the form of the infinitive altogether, either, like Ewald, change גַּל into גָּל, or take it as a preterite in an intransitive sense, *he depended.* But this alteration is altogether an arbitrary one, there is no trace anywhere of the form גָּל in the preterite, and there is not one single example of the verb being used in an intransitive sense. Besides, the preterite is unsuitable to the parallel: חפץ בו would, in that case, refer to the sufferer, not to God, *he has trusted in God,*

let him deliver him, let him rescue him, since he loves him. But that this will not answer, will be shown immediately.—The form גל is, in other passages, always used as an imperative. Compare Prov. xvi. 9, and Ps. xxxvii. 5. And this last passage makes it evident that it must be understood as such in the passage before us. But we must not, on this account, suppose with Gesenius, that the imperative is used here elliptically in the third person:—*devolvat.* "Devolve upon the Lord," had been the motto of the sufferer. This the mockers call out to the sufferer in an ironical manner, so that we must read the words with double marks of quotation. As the ungodly are introduced speaking, without any note of preparation, it can make no difficulty that they introduce the sufferer speaking in the same way. "*Trust in God* is his motto, now let this God deliver him." The "he has trusted,"—the "πέποιθεν" of the Septuagint, and of Matthew after the Septuagint, is contained, according to this exposition, in these words. To the "devolve" is, according to Prov. xvi. 3, Psal. xxxvii. 5, and 1 Pet. v. 7, to be supplied "thy way," "thy circumstances," "thy cares," or something similar. The idea is taken from those who lay a burden on the shoulders of others which is too heavy for them to bear themselves.—The subject in חפץ בו is the Lord, not the sufferer, as was seen by the Septuagint ὅτι θέλει αὐτόν, and by Matt. εἰ θέλει αὐτόν. חפץ בו is frequently used as applicable to the complacency with which the Lord regards his people: חפץ בידוה nowhere occurs. This exposition is also demanded by the ninth verse. Trust on the part of man, and delight on the part of God correspond: the conviction of being the object of delight to God, is the ground of the confidence;—it is because the righteous man knows that God delights in him, that he commits to him all his cares. The mockers see in the condition of the sufferer, (considering it as they do as utterly hopeless,) an unqualified reproach of his confidence—a practical denial of his conviction of being delighted in by God.—Finally, the mockers here, without intending it, bear testimony, and a testimony of all others the most beautiful, to the righteous man, that he has trusted in the grace of God, that he has cast himself, with his whole existence, upon God—and thus the insulting words "let him rescue him, let him deliver him," although, in their view, deliverance, in the circumstances of the case, is altogether impossible, contain an unde-

signed prophecy. God ordained it so, that the mockers at the cross of Christ, from an unconscious recollection, should utter these very words, and thus point out themselves as the ungodly in reference to the righteous one.

Ver. 9. *But thou didst take me out of my mother's womb, thou didst permit me to trust when on my mother's breasts.* The sufferer had hitherto, while complaining of it being altogether anomalous, that God had forsaken him, *silently taken it for granted,* that he was entirely in the same relation toward God, as those who had been gladdened by deliverances vouchsafed by God. What had hitherto been taken for granted, is here, and in the 10th verse, expressly asserted and defended: God is the God of the sufferer, as he has been the God of the fathers,—he has already shown himself as such in his helpless infancy,—he has given him good ground for exercising that confidence which is always followed by deliverance. Thus every other answer to the complaint, *why hast thou forsaken me,* is cut off except this, *I have not forsaken thee:* and full preparation is made for the prayer, ver. 11, *be not far from me.* The verse before us is in point of form an appendage to the last clause of the preceding one: he has delight in him: this is true, for thou, O God, hast given me the richest proof of thy delight. This connection is all the more suitable, when we observe that the mockers take, " he has pleasure in him," out of the lips of the sufferer, and speak it in fact out of his soul,—*what they in contempt upbraid me with, I have with perfect truth asserted, for thou, &c.* It appears at first sight remarkable, that the righteous man, in leading proof for the position that God is his God, should give such prominence to what is common to all. Still this thought loses much of its weight through the remark of Calvin: " this wonder has, through its frequency, become common, but if it were not that ingratitude had blinded our eyes, every birth would fill us with amazement, and every preservation of a child in its tender infancy, exposed as it is, even at its very entrance into the world, to death in a hundred forms." The following passage from Luther is of a similar import. " Augustine, in the first book of his Confessions, finds great enjoyment and consolation in similar reflections, where he praises God with devout admiration for his creation and birth, and extols the Divine goodness in taking him up, and committing him to the care and attention of his mother. Although thoughts such as these may appear childish, effemi-

nate, and unseasonable, for those who are in such pain and conflicts, yet experience here teaches us to think upon these tender, cheerful, lovely works of God, to seek a place of refuge when suffering the hard bites of the wrath and of the rod of God, and to enjoy the sweet and pleasant milk of our mother's heart, and all these other acts of mercy which were unfolded during the years of infancy. Thus shall we, when brought into trouble, be led to think, (as we are commanded to do,) on the days of happiness gone by: when distress and suffering are upon us, we shall remember the great grace and goodness of God manifested to us in early youth, and when we suffer as men, we shall reflect on what we enjoyed when children. . . . . Try and you will then understand what it is to see the Divine majesty employed and taken up with childish, that is, with small, insignificant, yea contemptible works." If any difficulty is felt after this, it may be removed by the assumption, that while the words were designed to suit the individual who belongs peculiarly to this Psalm, the Psalmist had immediately before his mind *the community of the righteous*, and, on this account, gave peculiar prominence to the grace of God manifested at the beginning of its existence, because then (that is at the deliverance from Egypt, &c.,) this grace was most gloriously manifested. Still we cannot go further, we cannot apply the verses directly and exclusively to the church, because they are constructed with so much of individuality, that the individual reference cannot be given up. This also is evident, as was seen in the introduction, from the passage, 22—26.—The term גחי is difficult. The still darker expression גוֹחִי, in the borrowed passage, Psalm lxxi. 6, gives us no assistance. It cannot be the participle, "*my drawer out,*" for גחח signifies always, and even in Micah iv. 10, *to break out;* this form of the participle, moreover, is always intransitive, Ewald, § 140. We must, therefore, just consider גחי as the infinitive,—"*my breaking out.*" God may be called "*the breaking out,*" because it was by his power alone this took place, just as he is in other places called the covenant, the salvation, the blessing, the joy, &c., because all these depend on him. מבטיחי refers back to בטחו, in verses 4 and 5:—to make or permit to trust, is to give ground to trust, to warrant to do so;—and this God had done to the sufferer, by protecting him in his early youth. Now, whoever is entitled *to trust,* in which nothing depends upon whether a man is *capable* of trusting, is also entitled *to help.* For trust and

help have always, in times past, been inseparably connected.

Ver. 10. *Upon thee was I cast from my mother's womb, from my mother's lap thou wast my God.* In the first of these clauses, there lies at the bottom, a reference to those who receive the child at the birth. Compare Genesis xvi. 2, Job iii. 12, "why did the knees receive me?" and Ruth iv. 16. The clause may be thus paraphrased: "thou hast received me when I was helpless, under thy mild protection; I fell as it were into thy lap, which was stretched out to receive me at my birth, and from having been fostered and cared for by thee, I have retained my life, whereas, otherwise, I would most assuredly have been the prey of death:" compare, in reference to the whole church, Ezekiel xvi. 5. The word השלכתי is wholly passive; and the exposition of De Wette is altogether inaccurate, "I have trusted in thee," and Stier remarks, "this would be indicated by some significant action, as was the case at the ancient ceremony of baptism." Here, as in the other clauses of these two verses, the language is not applicable to the state of feeling of the sufferer, but to the mercy of God actually manifested in deeds towards him. The clause, *thou art my God,* implies, thou hast manifested thyself as such. The first part of this Psalm thus returns at its close to the point at which it opened,—*my God, my God.* The sufferer's right to use this address, and consequently to put the question flowing from it, *why hast thou forsaken me?* has its foundation assigned to it in the two closing verses. Thus it is that every other answer to this question is cut off except this one, *I have not forsaken thee.*

Ver. 11. *Be not far from me, for trouble is near, while there is no helper.* From the demonstration given in the first part, that the forsaking would be completely anomalous, flows here the prayer, "be not far," in laying down the basis of which it is shown, that to be far away at such a time would mean entirely to forsake. The prayer has its basis assigned it in the very short expression, *for trouble is near.* This is much more accurately explained by Luther than by most modern expositors: "we are not to understand, that when the Psalmist says, trouble is near, he has any reference to *time,* as if it were now in his neighbourhood, and would fall suddenly upon him; but we are to understand him as speaking of the strength, the might and the power of the trouble which, even *now, is* upon him, and under which he complains that it is not taken away." That

thus "trouble is near," the expression—the sufferer says *trouble is near*, instead of *it is there*, in opposition to the distance of the Lord—is only to be understood af a trouble which had already been really inflicted, is evident from the expression which contains its basis, "for there is no helper," *i. e.* for I have been delivered over in a state of helplessness into the power of my enemies—the man with whom this is the case must assuredly find himself in the midst of the very deepest trouble, as ver. 12—18 is to be considered as its more extensive development.

Ver. 12. *Many bulls surround me, the strong ones of Bashan encompass me.* In applying the term bulls to his enemies, the Psalmist has an eye to their *strength* and *fury*. In "the bulls of Bashan,"—"the strong ones," that is, "the strong bulls,"—both properties are brought vividly before us—the first by their excellent pasture, the second by their feeding on mountains, and in forests, and being thus far removed from men, and untamed in all their habits.

Ver. 13. *They open their mouth wide against me,—a tearing and roaring lion.* The enemies are not only like lions, they are a lion, or lions themselves, in a spiritual sense. The lion roars chiefly when he looks at his prey, and is about to fall upon it. Compare Amos iii. 4; Ps. civ. 21.

Ver. 14. *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are separated, my heart has become like wax, melted in the midst of me.* The sufferer turns now from describing his outward trouble, (in the 12th and 13th verses) to lay open in this and the 15th verse his inward state thereby induced, which in like manner loudly proclaims, that now to be far away would mean utterly to forsake. "The picture of inward dissolution hastily sketched here in a few particulars," remarks Ewald, "is a very terrible one." The pouring out of water is here, according to the parallel, not descriptive of fear or dejection, but of the most complete dissolution of all strength and of powerlessness. The parallel passages are such as Psalm lviii. 8; 2 Sam. xiv. 14, "for we die, and are like water poured out on the earth," and especially 1 Samuel vii. 6, where the idea is embodied in a symbolical action,—the Israelites, when oppressed by the Philistines assembled at Mizpah, drew water and poured it out before the Lord, and cried out to him by symbolical signs, "we are poured out like water." Passages such as the following are not parallel, Jos. vii. 5, "and the heart of the people melted and became like water,"

or Lamentations ii. 19. The reference in them is chiefly to the heart, and they are rather to be considered as parallel to the last clause of the verse before us. As emblematical of moral helplessness or mental imbecility, the figure occurs in Genesis xlix. 4, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."—"All my bones are separated," implies, in like manner, complete powerlessness and exhaustion. Muis: non secus vacillat totum corpus quam si omnia ossa luxata sint et a suis quaeque avulsa locis. Compare Daniel v. 6.—*The heart melts*, when a person sinks into despair when in extreme irremediable distress. Luther: "Those who have good hope and are cheerful, are said to have a fresh, strong, confident, hard, good heart, which stands immoveable like a hard rock. And thus also, on the other hand, those who are cast down and terrified, are said to have a soft and feeble heart, which dissolves and melts like wax." Such melting sometimes befals even those who, like David, have the heart of a lion. Compare 2 Sam. vii. 10.

Ver. 15. *My strength is dried up like a potsherd: and my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth: and thou bringest me to the dust of death.* As כֹּחַ always signifies strength, and cannot be translated moisture, the יבש must be understood as used in an improper sense:—my power is entirely wasted away like the moisture out of a dried potsherd. There are other instances of similar abrupt comparisons: Ps. cii. 4, "My heart is smitten and withered like grass," *i. e.* is as much destroyed as withered grass is.—The cleaving of the tongue to the roof of the mouth is the consequence of pain and anguish;—compare Job xxix. 10. Luther: "it is incredible how this inward anguish, and terror, and dismay, withers and dries up completely and suddenly the whole moisture of all the parts of the body, and makes them weak and good for nothing, especially the moisture of the tongue, with which we chiefly feel this thirst and drought." On the accusative מלקוחי compare Ewald, p. 588.—In reference to the last clause Luther remarks, "he puts down this as the sum and final conclusion." The לעפר, when taken exactly, is not "to the dust," but, "so that I belong to the dust." The *dust of death* is the dust which has reference to death, that is, the dust of the grave. The future stands in the sense of the present—the sufferer is already more dead than alive. Every thing that belongs peculiarly to life has already disappeared—all vital spirits, all vital strength,—so that when what is commonly called

death comes, which the sufferer sees immediately before his eyes, it finds almost nothing left for it to take. The expression, "*thou* bringest me," is deserving of observation. The sufferer considers every thing only as an instrument in the hands of God. Hence, on the one hand, his pain was augmented; but hence also, there was laid for his *hope* its necessary basis. He who cannot trace his sufferings to God alone, cannot with a full heart look to him for deliverance. He only who sends it can remove it, and he must remove it in cases similar to the present one, even when all prospect of deliverance appears to be gone. Calvin: "as often as this darkness befals the spirits of believers, there are always some remains of unbelief, which prevent them from rising into the light of the new life. But in the case of Christ, there existed together in a wonderful manner both terror from the curse of God, and patience from faith quieting all inward emotions, so that these were kept at rest under the power of God."

Ver. 16. *For dogs compass me, the band of the wicked besets me, like lions on my hands and feet.* The sufferer calls his enemies here dogs, on account of their fury and bitterness. Compare on the savage ferocity of Eastern dogs Oedmann's Collections, 5, p. 21, 2, and Laborde's Geographical Commentary on Exodus and Numbers, p. 59.—The first word of the last clause is read differently: כָּאֲרִי (in the received text,) כָּאֲרוּ כָּאֲרֵי and כָּרוּ. If we pay regard to external evidence, there can be no doubt that כָּאֲרִי is the true reading, and it would be to abandon everything like certainty in criticism, and along with this, criticism itself, were we to reject this reading, and to substitute instead of it, with Ewald, the reading כָּאֲרוּ. The external evidence for the other readings is as good as nothing. כארו is found only in two unsuspected Jewish manuscripts: כרו not even in one primary, and only in a few copied manuscripts. The received text, besides having on its side the whole weight of the MSS., is also supported by the Masora. None of the old translators are against it, for these, without following any other reading, might, like many of the later expositors, draw out the sense which they express from the received text, and even although, in some few instances, כארי may not lie at the foundation of the translation, this would not imply any other variety of reading than a conjectural emendation, caused by the difficulty felt in interpreting the passage. Assuredly, if the old translators had found any variety

in the text, some traces of it would have remained in their translations. Further, though the reasons of an external kind were such as to leave room for hesitation, considerations of an internal nature would lead us to decide in favour of the received text. For it is from the more difficult reading that the others may be conceived to have arisen, and not the contrary.—In regard to the explanation of כארי, thus determined to be the true reading, most interpreters proceed on the supposition that it is the plural of a participle, the rare plural-form instead of כארים, from the root כור. The participle is properly כָּר, but the insertion of א is not without example in other passages: (See Gesenius' Lehrg. p. 401.) If we adopt this view as to the form, which for a long time was the very generally prevailing one, we must adhere to all the points adverted to in the Christol. I. 1, p. 180. We can neither translate it "they fetter," as was usually done at the time of the publication of the Christology, nor "they disfigure," but only "they pierce," after the example of the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Syriac. It is also obvious that if we adopt this view, the words must have a special reference to Christ, for the mention of the piercing of hands and feet here cannot otherwise be accounted for, and the idea of Gesenius, that the hands and feet may poetically denote the whole body, is altogether untenable. What was brought forward in the Christology to prove, that not only Christ's hands, but also his feet, were literally pierced, has been presented more in detail by Bahr, in a paper specially devoted to this purpose, and in a defence of the same against the objections of Paulus which appeared in Tholuck's Literary Anzieger for 1833. *But we must not forget that the supposition that* כארי *is a plural participle, which was commonly entertained at the date of the publication of the Christology, is encompassed by so many difficulties, that it can be adopted only at the very last extremity.* When three irregularities occur in the same word, as in the present instance, 1st, The use of the plural form in י, which, at the best, is extremely rare, and indeed occurs only in one single well ascertained instance; 2d, The participial form with א; and 3d, The use of כור in the sense of כרה, they acquire a force, when united, very different from what they would have if they occurred apart. Besides, let it be remarked, these words, according to this interpretation, have a special reference to Christ, whereas, on the grounds adduced in the introduction, it is evi-

dent that the Psalm has reference to him only as embodying the perfect idea of the *righteous man*,—a supposition which would render unsuitable anything having reference *exclusively* to Christ. Last of all, had the New Testament writers approved of the correctness of this interpretation, which was put into their hands by the current translation of the Septuagint, ὤρυξαν χεῖράς μου καὶ πόδας,—so eagerly made use of by all the Christian fathers—how comes it that they should not have pointed to the fulfilment of this very characteristic feature in Christ, and that, when they obviously had this Psalm before their eyes throughout their whole narrative of Christ's sufferings, they should have quoted, what assuredly was not so characteristically and individually fulfilled in him. So far are they, however, from applying this clause to Christ, that they do not seem, in writing their narrative, to have even distinctly thought of the piercing of his feet at all Thus this view can be adopted only in the very last extremity; and this is not the case here. *There is another view which can be suggested, in which every anomaly of form disappears, without introducing any impropriety in regard to the sense.* The כ is the particle of comparison: the אֲרִי is the same as אַרְיֵה, a lion. The כַּאֲרִי, written exactly as it is here, occurs in the sense of lion-like in Is. xxxviii. 13. The Masoretic mark in that passage, is not of so much importance as to indicate decidedly, that the כַּאֲרִי there, has a different sense from the כַּאֲרִי here, any more than the Keris of the Massora, which in many cases are obviously false. The יָדַי וְרַגְלָי is the accusative, as commonly used in naming any part or member of the body to which reference more immediately is made: comp. Ewald, 512—"they beset me, lion-like, on my hands and feet." The mention of lions cannot but be regarded here as extremely natural, as emblems drawn from the brute creation run throughout the whole Psalm, as the enemies had already been represented in the 13th verse, under the emblem of a tearing and roaring lion, as the sufferer, the poor defenceless hind, in the 21st verse prays, "deliver from the mouth of the lion," and finally, as the connection between the lions here and the dogs introduced in the first clause of the verse before us, is exceedingly appropriate. The objections urged against this interpretation,—an interpretation which Luther recognised as decidedly required by the grammar, but which, as he most unaccountably thought, must give way to the theology of the case,—are only of importance, in so far as they show in

what way the old translations, the Massora, and a few Hebrew manuscripts, were induced to give up the true interpretation or reading, and so cannot be regarded as having any authority in the matter before us. It is said that *to surround* will not apply to lions, who spring upon their prey. But the surrounding is not here said of the lions, but of the band of evil-doers, and the point of comparison between them and the lion is not this, but their *wild fury*. It is farther objected, that the singular, "like a lion," is not at all appropriate. But this objection can be urged as of force, only on the supposition that the point of comparison is the surrounding. Except on this supposition, the singular is as suitable here as it is in ver. 13 and ver. 21, and the fact that the singular is used in both these passages, tends very much to give our interpretation more of an appearance of certainty:—compare also the singular כלב in verse 20. Besides the expression is not *a lion*, but *the lion*. The Kametz shows that the word has the article:—otherwise it would have had the Patach;—compare Ewald, 464. The term, "the lion," indicates the species, and must be viewed as referring not to the number, but to the disposition and nature. Further, that the ידי ורגלי, as there is already an accusative in דקיפוני, requires another verb, or renders an extraordinary ellipsis necessary, could be maintained only before the relative form of the accusative had been sufficiently examined. Last of all "*hands and feet*" are by no means superfluous. The hands are the instruments of defence, the feet the means of escape:—*my furious foes have so beset me, that I can stir neither hand nor foot.* These are the objections of Stier. Ewald remarks that the figure of lions is not at all appropriate in this connection, for it is only the shamelessness that is intended to be depicted. But this objection is wholly futile. It is not the *shamelessness*, but the *wild fury*, that is the point of resemblance in the comparison of dogs. The designation of the enemies as "evil-doers," and the connection of this verse with the two preceding ones—assigning as it does, the cause of the sufferings here described—show that in this case he has made a great mistake.

Ver. 17. *I count all my bones; these men look, they stare at me.* The furious enemies have already *dragged* out the dying sufferer, and are enjoying the sad sight of his complete emaciation,—a sight which fills him with pain. The אספר is generally rendered, "I could count." Against this flat rendering we have the analogy be-

tween יביטו and יראו—*I count, they look,*—and of the other futures both preceding and following. The sufferer, sinking painfully under his complete emaciation, counts the bones of his naked body, every one of which necessarily draws upon itself painful attention: here one and there one, and all stripped of their flesh from first to last, every one of them. Job xxxiii. 21, is parallel. Of the enemies it is said; *first,* that they are spectators of a miserable sight, from which every feeling man would turn away and shut his eyes, feeling his soul pierced by the sight of such suffering in a brother; and *next,* that they look upon this sight, not only with rude unconcern, but even with inward joy. The ראה with ב, signifies to look at any thing to which one has a strong inclination, and hence to delight in.

Ver. 18. *They part my garments among them, and on my vesture they cast lots.* Clothing is the necessary condition of life; without clothes no man can be seen in public. When one's clothes are taken away, and, what is worse, disposed of, that person, if he is not dead, must be considered as being, with perfect certainty, at the very point of death. The sufferer, in this view, in concluding the description of his distress, and when on the very threshold of his prayer, declares that he is now at the very last stage,—that his enemies are now ready to give him the last stroke, now that he is more dead than alive.—It is impossible here to think of the custom of spoiling enemies, for the distress throughout the Psalm is not of a warlike character:—the sufferer is completely helpless, his situation corresponding entirely to that of Christ. Moreover, it is a slain enemy, not a living one, that is spoiled. Neither can we render the clause: they are about to divide my clothes among them, or they are thinking about doing it. For יחלקו and יפילו, like the other verbs, must refer to what is going on as present. The idea of nakedness is indeed implied in the preceding verbs also. We have not only, "I count all my bones," but "they look, they stare at me," *i. e.* "they enjoy themselves in looking at one disfigured to a skeleton." The connection would be broken, were we to consider the looking only in reference to distress in general. Lastly, we cannot suppose that a *figurative* expression is here used, for this trait, like the rest of the painting, should tend to *individualize* the subject of the Psalm, which, as we have already seen, is the ideal person of the *Righteous One.* The situation of such a one, with death immediately before him, might have been described

also by other expressions.—How exactly the whole contents of this verse were fulfilled in Christ is rendered very clear, if we keep in view an observation, which Luther, with manifestly good reason, makes on the dividing of the clothes: "I hold that the soldiers did not divide the clothes from need, or for gain, but in the way of jest, and for the purpose of enjoying a laugh, and *as a sign that it was now all over with this Christ,* that he was utterly ruined, destroyed, extirpated, and never more to be heard of." —בגדיכם is clothes in general, לבוש is specially the principal article of dress, the long robe, without which the person is altogether naked. There is thus a gradation in the clauses: compare Job xxiv. 7—10; Ps. xxxv. 13; Es. iv. 2; John xix. 23, 24.

The sufferer had shown; first, that it would be completely anomalous if God intended to forsake him; second, that for God not to help him at present would be to forsake him; and now the prayer breaks forth with full power, ver. 19—21, that God would help him now, which, towards its conclusion, passes on to the confident expectation of being heard.

Ver. 19. *And thou, O Lord, be not far from me, O my strength, make haste to my help.* Stier well remarks that אילותי looks very like as if it were an etymological explanation of the אלי in the commencement of the Psalm. The reference to the אילת of the title has been already pointed out. The expression *make haste to help me,* refers us back to the twelfth verse, *there is none to help.*

Ver. 20. *Deliver my soul from the sword, my lonely person from the dogs.* Calvin: "Should any one ask, how can this apply to Christ, seeing the Father did not deliver him from death; I answer, in one word, he was more mightily delivered than if the danger had been averted, just as much more so, as to raise from the dead is a mightier act than to heal from sickness. Wherefore the death of Christ did not prevent his resurrection from testifying that he was delivered." His death might well be called no death, but a simple passage to life.—The sword is an individualising expression for whatever is an instrument of death. Compare 2 Sam. xi. 25, and ver. 24. The מיד cannot, from what follows,—*from the mouth from the horns,*—be with propriety considered as equivalent to the simple מן; the Psalmist is here speaking of dogs who have hands. On the יחידתי Luther remarks: "He wishes to say my soul is alone and forsaken by every body, there is no one who enquires after it, cares for it,

or comforts it." In like manner, at Ps. cxlii. ver. 5, he says: "Look on the right hand, see, there no one will know me, I cannot escape, no one cares for my soul." Most interpreters, like Gesenius, consider the sufferer as saying that he has only *one* life to lose. But the view given above by Luther is to be preferred, because, according to it, the word forms part of the description of the condition given in the preceding verses, and agrees with the parallel passages, Ps. xxv. 16; xxxv. 17; lxviii. 7. The other idea does not occur in any similar passage.

Ver. 21. *Deliver me from the lion's mouth, and from the horns of the buffalo,—thou hearest me.* Luther: "The rage of the furious devil is so great, that the prophet does not consider it enough to have represented it by a sharp sword, but introduces further, for the same purpose, the tearings of raging furious dogs, the mouth of a greedy and hungry lion, which stands always open, and the dreadfully fierce wrath of the raging terrible unicorn." The ענה is very full of meaning, and contains in it the idea of deliverance. There can be no grammatical objection made to the common rendering, "*hear me.*" When the preceding verbs are imperative or optative, the succeeding ones are very frequently simply descriptive. But on the other side, and in favour of the word being considered as expressing the idea of *confidence of being heard*, the circumstance of its standing at the end of the prayer, the following verses, which take it for granted that something must have been previously said expressive of confidence, and, lastly, the reference which is implied to the לא תענה of verse second, are of considerable weight. *Thou hearest me not*, there, corresponds here at the close of the conflict to *thou dost hear me.* In a prayer of this kind, which rests on grounds such as those on which the sufferer rests, the transition to confidence is a very easy one. In such a *Lord come*, there must always be a slumbering *here I am.* We may consider מקרני רמים and עניתני as separated by a small pause. The sufferer had *O do thou save me* upon his tongue: but immediately he becomes able to entertain the confident expectation of being heard, and thus passes suddenly from the prayer to the expression of assured confidence: *and from the horns of the buffalo—thou hast heard me.*

Having thus become assured of his deliverance, the sufferer next paints the happy consequences which were to flow from it. First, from ver. 22—ver. 26, in regard to Israel.

Ver. 22. *I will make known thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the assembly I will praise thee.* The name is the focus in which all the rays of the acts converge, so that, to make known the name of the Lord, especially in a situation defined by the preceding description, is to make known what he has done. The address in the 23d verse shows whom we are to understand by the brethren: they are the whole posterity of Israel. The deliverance vouchsafed, is important not only to the sufferer, and perhaps to a few of his friends:—all his brethren, the whole people of the covenant, (compare *our fathers*, ver. 4,) shall participate in it, and shall be led by means of it to see the glory of God. We find the *heathen* in ver. 27, opposed to the brethren. The false seed exclude themselves from sharing in this blessing. The assembly is not a small circle of friends, but it consists of all the brethren of the sufferer—the whole seed of Israel: compare "the whole assembly of Israel," in Leviticus xvi. 17, and Deut. xxxi. 30. But this assembly, which also is meant in these parallel passages, Psalm. xxxv. 18; xl. 10; xlix. 1, is here in a twofold sense, an *ideal one.* First, every public assembly in the temple was considered as an ideal assembly of the whole people, inasmuch as, though from accidental causes all the members could not really be present in person, those present represented the whole people. Compare 2 Chron. xx. 3—15: "And Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast over all Judah: and all Israel assembled to pray to the Lord: and Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the Lord: —and the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehaziel in the midst of the assembly, and he said, hearken ye, all Judah and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem." Second, we are not to consider, that here, or in the parallel passages, the Psalmist considered a literal assembly of the people to be necessary to realize the idea meant to be conveyed. It is unlikely that every one, who should obtain deliverance, could have an opportunity to come into the public assembly for the worship of God, with the praise upon his lips of the delivering grace of God. The kernel is only this, that the grace imparted to an individual member of the church, would tend to the good of *the whole.* The form, in which the salvation comes from the individual to the whole church, is an accidental circumstance of minor importance. The Psalmist here makes choice of that form which is most conspicuous, and has in it most of a poetical character, without, *in reality*, intending

it more than others, as an example of the way in which the Lord should realise the contents of the passage before us,—viz. a festive assembly of the whole people in the sanctuary, and the delivered sufferer glorifying God, and singing praise in the midst of this great assembly.—The observation of De Wette is altogether incorrect: "we are to consider the brethren, the assembly as sharing the same lot with the poet," (the righteous one.) There is no trace of this in what follows. The salvation vouchsafed to the single individual extends in so far to all, whether they be in the same situation or not, as the glory of God is reflected in it, advancement in the knowledge of which is salutary and quickening to all.

There follow in the 23d and 24th verses the words, in which the sufferer now delivered, intends to make known the name of God, and to praise him in the midst of the assembly.

Ver. 23. *Ye who fear the Lord praise him, all ye of the seed of Jacob glorify him, and be afraid before him, all ye of the seed of Israel.* Not without good reason does the Psalmist begin with, *ye who fear God.* He thereby intimates that he has to do, not with the seed of Jacob as such, who are united together only by a carnal covenant, but with those whose souls are and mated by one common spiritual principle. In point of form the address is directed to the whole church. Those who are not of the church, though they are in the church, are overlooked. As intruders they are not known—as such they are, however, sufficiently indicated in the words, *ye who fear God.* The "fear," the "glorify," and the "be afraid," especially the last, show evidently that the delivered sufferer is not merely taken up with those who are in a situation similar to his own To those he would have cried out before every thing else, *put your trust in him.* The "be ye afraid," shows, that he who is great in grace must also be great in wrath, against those who despise. God is as omnipotent in all respects, as he is in one.

Ver. 24. *For he did not despise nor abhor the affliction of the afflicted, neither did he hide his face from him, and when he cries to him he has heard.* Luther: "this makes God exceedingly lovely, so that all the godly love him, and must praise him, that his eyes alone see and are turned upon the afflicted and the poor: and the more despised and rejected a man is, so much the more is God near and gracious to him. As if he said, 'see and learn from my example, I, who have been the most despised and

rejected of all men, have been regarded, cared for, and heard in the most friendly manner.' " The עִנּוּת is explained, but erroneously, by the old translators, by *prayer*.

Ver. 25. *Of thee shall my praise be heard in the great congregation; I will pay my vows before them that fear him.* Of thee is my praise:—not: thou hast given me occasion to praise; but: thou art the subject of my praise. Calvin: "David canendi argumentum ex deo petit." From the connection and the parallel, the speaker does not here refer to what God has done to him, but to how he is to thank God, what blessed consequences, as regards the things of God, are to flow from his deliverance. The *my praise* refers back to the praises of Israel in ver. 3. The grating discord, caused by the groanings of the sufferer being heard mingling with the praises of Israel, is now *at an end*.—In the second clause, and in the following verse, which is intimately connected with it, the representation is of a figurative kind. It was customary, in circumstances of great distress, to make vows, which were wont to consist of a promise to offer a certain number of sacrifices. After deliverance had been obtained, it was customary to invite to the feast connected therewith, the widow, the orphan, and the poor, (compare Deut. xii. 18; xvi. 11,) and to make them partakers of the salvation which, on no occasion, was ever imparted to the individual merely for himself—sharers of the joy. In such cases the enjoyment throughout was not merely of a sensual kind: the guests rejoiced in the reciprocations of friendship as really as did the master of the feast. The soul of the feast consisted in the entertainment given by the company to feelings of thankfulness and praise. And hence, in the passage before us, when the gratitude of the delivered sufferer expresses itself under the emblem of paying a vow—the usual expression of gratitude,—it is exceedingly natural that others should be invited to share in the blessing and the thanksgiving, under the image of a great sacrificial-feast given by him, in which all that fear God take part.—Hoffman denies that the idea of a feast is at all implied in the passage. He interprets the paying of the vows as expressing nothing more than the giving of thanks. But the vow always refers to something outward—to something more than feeling, or the expression, in language, of feeling. Throughout, the usual kind of vows are offerings: compare Lev. vii. 16: and especially Ps. lxvi. 12—15: Michaelis on the Law of Moses, part iii. p. 145. In Ps. l. 14;

lxi. 9, to which Hoffman appeals, there is such a figurative representation. That by the vow here we are to understand literally promised-thank-offerings, which in reality are identical with thanksgiving and praise—for the sacrifice is altogether a figure, as in Hos. xiv. 3, Heb. xiii. 15, and other passages,—is evident incontestibly from, *they shall eat,* in the following verse; compare also אכלו, in verse 28.

Ver. 26. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied, praise the Lord ye that seek him, let your heart live for ever:* The *let live* includes within it, *shall live,* and expresses, that this is agreeable to the wishes of the speaker. The heart *dies* in trouble, care, pains, (Ps. cix. 22; 1 Sam. xxv. 37,) and especially when it has become perplexed in reference to God. The *for ever* paints the opposition to a transitory or short-lived quickening, which any inferior manifestation of God would give. He has *here* made himself known in such a glorious manner, that whoever has incorporated into his soul *this* his manifestation, will stand in need of no other spiritual food, but on the strength of it will live for ever.

From Israel the righteous man now turns to the heathen.

Ver. 27. *All ends of the earth shall ponder and turn to the Lord, all the tribes of the heathen shall worship before him.* The זכר very frequently signifies, not to remember, but to ponder, to lay to heart. The *object* of this pondering is in reality identical with the object of the eating in v. 26 and 28—the thanks and the praise of the righteous man for the glorious deliverance wrought out for him, and hence with the deliverance itself: compare צדקתו in v. 31. The salvation of the Lord is so great, that it awakens the whole heathen world out of its stupid insensibility. Hoffman refers the יזכרו to Jehova: *they will think upon Jehova.* But this exposition proceeds from the attempt to disjoin the conversion of the heathen from the deliverance of the speaker. And the circumstance, that this connection is obscured by this interpretation, is against it. Besides, let us compare with the יאכלו of v. 26, and the אכלו of verse 29, (to which *they worship* stands in the same relation as the וישובו does to the יזכרו in the passages before us), the יספר of the 30th verse, which refers to the salvation imparted to the speaker, and the עשה of the 31st verse, and we must feel compelled to reject this exposition, and the view of the Psalm with which it is connected, as requiring such forced assistance.—In the וישובו it is not at all implied, as Umbreit remarks, that the heathen originally

possessed the truth. The word means properly to turn round (here, from idols), and hence, in a secondary sense, to turn back. —The second clause alludes to the promises made to the patriarchs, and especially to Gen. xii. 3; xxviii. 14.

Ver. 28. *For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he rules among the heathen.* The verse grounds the announcement given in the preceding one, that, at a future time, the heathen shall do homage to the Lord, on this, that he alone is the lawful king of the earth. To be in reality, and not to be acknowledged, can be separated only for a little. The Lord is the King of the whole earth, and he must at some future time be acknowledged as such—a result which will be brought about through the manifestation of the Divine glory seen in the deliverance of the righteous man. The parallel passages are not Zech. xiv. 9, or Obed. 21., but Ps. xcvi. 10; xcvii. 1; and xcix. 1.

The removal of the distinction between Jews and Gentiles is succeeded by the removal of the distinctions of conditions and circumstances.

Ver. 29. *All the fat ones of the earth eat and worship, all who go down to the dust, and those who respited not their lives shall bow down before him.* The image of the feast is here resumed. There is, however, a contrast to the ordinary sacrificial feasts, to which the poor more especially are invited. This great spiritual feast, (and it is proved even by this verse itself to be a *spiritual* feast), is not unworthy of the presence even of those who live in the greatest abundance: it contains a costly viand, which all their plenty cannot give—a viand for which even the satisfied are hungry: and, on the other hand, the most needy and the most miserable are not excluded. It is a feast at which all earthly distinctions are removed, because here, all guests are poor, here God is rich for all. The idea, that "to eat," may be interpreted by "to worship," requires nothing to be said against it. The "eat" belongs in reality also to the second clause; the "bow down," corresponding to the "worship," is the thanks for the entertainment. The דשני, from the adjective דָּשֵׁן, *fat*, denotes the satisfied fulness of the being. The יורדי עפר is not a general reference to misery, but especially to death, in opposition to חיים in the emphatic sense, and denotes one who may be said to be dead, though he has still the appearance and the frailest tenure of life. This is clear, first, from the reference to the clause of the 15th verse, "thou layest me in the dust of death,"

according to which the dust here can mean only the dust of the grave, for which עפר is very often used: compare the Lexicons. The same person who had to complain that he had fallen into the possession of death, now proclaims the fountain of life to all who may be in similar circumstances. Second, from the parallel, *who respited not their lives.* Third, from comparing the frequently occurring phrases, יורדי בור, יורדי מות, יורדי שאול, which at the same time show that the language does not refer to those who go down, but to those who are already gone down. —The last clause, literally, *who made not alive his own soul,* must mean, who could not deliver themselves from that death, into whose hands they had fallen.

The last barrier that is removed, is that of time.

Ver. 30. *Posterity shall serve him: it shall be told of the Lord to the generation.* Several interpret: *the seed which shall serve him shall be reckoned to him for a generation.* But, according to this view, the whole is thrown into one, and the parallelism is destroyed. This interpretation also is opposed by the following verse, in which the idea expressed here is more fully brought out, viz. that the deliverance shall not, like others of inferior moment, be ever forgotten, by the correspondence between the removal of differences in point of time here spoken of, and the removal of those of nation and condition adverted to in the preceding verses, and, lastly, by the reference of the וְסִפַּר to the אֲסַפְּרָה of verse 22. The זרע *seed,* is defined by its connection with what precedes to be the posterity of those here spoken of. לאדני is properly *in reference to the Lord.* The thing to be made known, that viz. which the Lord has done to the righteous man, is not expressly mentioned, because sufficiently clear from the preceding context. In like manner, there is understood immediately after, "shall serve him," "because of this glorious manifestation." The generation here, is the אחרון דור of Psalm xlviii. 13, lxxviii. 4. The generation which tells, is the present one, and the generation to which it is told, is the future one. In like manner, it is clear in Psalm lxxi. 18, that the generation is defined from the connection. דור is never used in a collective sense. That it indicates here the succeeding generation, is evident from ver. 31. The revelation of the Divine glory goes forth from the present to the next, and from that again to the one which follows it.

Ver. 31. *They shall come and make known his righteousness to*

the people which then have been born, that he has done it. The subject is *the seed* and *the generation* of the former verse. The succeeding generation will not allow the knowledge committed to them to lie dormant. It will, from its excellence, get life among them, and from them it will be handed down again to the next generation. *They shall come,* is, *they shall go forth on the theatre of the world:* comp. Ps. lxxi. 18. The *righteousness* of God embraces his faithfulness to his covenant and to his promises, which he has so gloriously manifested in the deliverance of the righteous man. There is no reason why we should translate עם נולד, *the people which shall yet be born:* compare on the use of the participle for the future, Ewald, p. 534. The obvious interpretation, *the people which has been born at the time when the next generation are on the field,* gives a very suitable sense. In like manner the עם נברא in Ps. cii. 18, is the people which has been then created. We must supply the object from the preceding context to the עשה, viz. *what has been previously described:* as was the case with יאכלו in ver. 26, יזכרו in ver. 27, and אכלו in ver. 29. It will not do to suppose that עשה is used in an absolute and emphatic sense, *he has acted,* i. e. manifested himself gloriously. Whenever it is used in the way in which it is in the verse before us, the object always lies concealed in what had previously been said. The last word of our Saviour on the cross, τετελεσται, evidently refers to this עשה, as his first exclamation is taken from the beginning of the Psalm:—the surest key to the right interpretation of the whole, as well as of the variously misinterpreted cry of our Saviour. According to this view we are to regard *the work of God* as that which *was finished.* The last moment of suffering is the first of deliverance, and the expiring Saviour indicates that this is now at hand; that he has now received an answer, not in words but in deed, to the question, why hast thou forsaken me? and that the morning-dawn is now succeeding to the dark night. *The Resurrection* realizes the exclamation, *it is finished.*

PSALM XXIII.

The first verse,—*the Lord is my shepherd I want for nothing,* —contains the fundamental thought of the Psalm. This thought is merely expanded from ver. 2 to ver. 5: for he affords delight-

ful rest to the weary, ver. 2; refreshment to the languid, and deliverance to the miserable, ver. 3; protection and defence in the midst of danger, ver. 4; food and drink to the hungry and thirsty, ver. 5; thus everything which human necessity requires. The conclusion assumes the general form of the introductory clause, with this difference, that the figure employed there becomes a reality here.

According to the common view, the goodness of God towards his people is represented in this Psalm by a *mixed metaphor:* first, that of a shepherd, (ver. 1—4), and, second, that of the master of a household, (ver. 5). But this view, which destroys altogether the unity of the Psalm, depends only on the gratuitous supposition, that the Psalmist must always speak of the spiritual shepherd, in terms which have been taken from the relations of the temporal shepherd. That the Psalmist paid very little attention to any such rule of criticism, but made a free use of his figure, is evident from the third verse, which, on this view, it would be impossible to explain. But, in reality, even the fifth verse praises the shepherd-faithfulness of God. It is because he is faithful to his charge as a shepherd, that he prepares a table before the Psalmist. In this he does in reality nothing more than what a good shepherd would do for his irrational sheep. But what is altogether decisive against this view, is, that on the idea that the praise of the good shepherd terminates at ver. 4, the main indispensable feature, (John x. 9), that he provides nourishment, is altogether wanting. And that there is no trace of this in the 2d verse, according to the common view, will be evident from our exposition.

That David is the author of this Psalm, admits of no doubt, and the attempt of Hitzig to attribute it to Jeremiah, will be always welcome to those who would characterise his critical ways. The Psalm requires, and will bear, no historical exposition. The opinions which have been advanced on this subject, such as those of J. D. Michaelis, Maurer, and others, that David composed it when, on some occasion when his provisions were exhausted, there was sent to him, in the fields, a plentiful supply of food, only show how far this predilection for historical interpretation will lead, and that the abettors of it, as is plain in almost every instance, are unable to steer their course aright, when they get fairly within the domain of spiritual truth, or to understand figurative language when applied to spiritual things.

It is evident, generally, from the spirit and tone of the Psalm, that it was composed at a time when David was not disturbed by any sufferings or dangers in his enjoyment of the grace of God,—at a time of quiet and restoration, which he knew so beautifully to describe. It shows us not only that David took God for his refuge in distress, but that in a season of prosperity he did not forget the Giver amidst the gifts, but made these, (as Calvin expresses it,) a ladder by which he might ascend continually nearer to God. Some have expressed a wish even to dispense with this limitation. "Why," says Stier, "should he not for once, even in trouble, be thus confident and quiet?" But the unanimity with which other expositors of spiritual experience express their conviction, that this Psalm was sung by David at a time of revival, renders us exceedingly distrustful of this idea. The expression in the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that no affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, holds *unexceptionably* true. A sufferer may, even in the midst of severest trials, maintain a certain degree of joyful confidence, but for all this, the sun will be only, as it were, shining through clouds, the pain and the distress will never be looked upon as at so great a distance, will never be so completely triumphed over as they are in the case before us.—Finally, the confidence to which expression is here given, is not that of a child, is not that of one who goes forth to meet the pains and troubles of life, of which he has had no experience, with a clear joy, flowing from consciousness of communion with God: it is that of an experienced combatant, one who has come through many troubles, who knows what it is to have to do with them, and who has richly experienced how the Lord comforts in them, and delivers out of them. The praise of the rest, which the Lord imparts, lets us see in the Psalmist a weary pilgrim; the thanksgiving for refreshment shows us one worn out; the expression, *when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, &c., brings before us one who had already had experience of the dark ways of suffering, and who had yet to walk in them. The expressions, *in sight of my enemies*, ver. 5, and *shall follow me*, ver. 6, show that we have here to do with one who, like David, had fought hard with enemies. Every where, it is not the sunburnt shepherd boy in the midst of his peaceful lambs, that meets us here, but the man David, who had experienced the hardships of the days of Saul. And yet it is from the recollec-

tions of this peaceful season of youth, that the figure of the Good Shepherd is drawn, which meets us for the first time in this Psalm in a *full* form.

The absence of everything like exact personal reference, renders it exceedingly probable that David sung this Psalm as it were from the soul of *every* believer, and that he expressed in it his own personal joy, with the design of strengthening his brethren, and embodying their feelings in language. The reference made by the Jewish commentators, of the Psalm to the whole people, may be decidedly rejected only if placed *in opposition* to an individual interpretation. As David undoubtedly designed the Psalm for the public worship of God, the thought could not be far distant from his mind, that its contents must be applicable no less to the whole body of the people than to each individual. It ought to be observed, that in all the other passages of the Old Testament, the figure of a good shepherd is used in reference to the faithfulness which God manifests towards his church.

It has been frequently maintained (latterly by Umbreit), that the contents of the Psalm are of a peculiar character as regards the Old Testament, and that they stand especially opposed to the Mosaic law, with its jealous God, who visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation. This idea, however, is decidedly without foundation. It proceeds altogether from looking upon God exclusively as he stands revealed in his relationship to sinners under the law, and from not observing the aspect of grace which even there he presents. It is in the books of Moses that God is first represented as the Shepherd of Israel, Gen. xlviii. 15; xlix. 24, and nowhere do we find such touching proofs of the shepherd-care of God as in the lives of the patriarchs. The description of the tender care of God for his people, in Deut. xxxii. 6—14, forms a remarkable parallel to *the Lord is my shepherd:* and the care of God for his people during their sojourn through the wilderness, as detailed in the law, is described in Psalm lxxviii. 52, as that of a faithful shepherd.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is my shepherd, I want for nothing.* Of all the figures that are applied to God in the Old Testament, that of a shepherd is the most beautiful. "The other names," says Luther, "sound somewhat too gloriously and majestically, and bring, as it were, an awe and fear with them, when we hear

them uttered. This is the case, when the Scriptures call God our Lord, King, Creator. This, however, is not the case with the sweet word *shepherd.* It brings to the godly, when they read it or hear it, as it were a confidence, a consolation or security, like the word *father.* We cannot better understand this consoling and lovely word, than by going to nature, and learning carefully from her, what are the dispositions and the properties of the sheep, and what is the duty, the labour, the care of a good shepherd. A sheep can only live through the help, protection, and care of its shepherd. As soon as it goes astray, it is exposed to dangers of every kind, and must perish, for it cannot help itself. The reason is, it is a poor, weak, silly creature. But, weak creature though it be, it has the property about it, that it keeps by its shepherd with all diligence, depends upon his help and protection, follows wherever he leads, and, if it can only be near him, it cares for nothing, is afraid of no one, but feels secure and happy, for it wants for nothing." It is to be observed, that in both the cases in which the figure of the shepherd is first used in Scripture, the speakers, Jacob and David, were led to employ it from their own personal experience. Having been introduced by them, the figure was made use of by other writers, who knew nothing of its import from their own history. This is the case particularly with Isaiah (xl. 11,) and Ezekiel (xxxiv. 13,) who comforts the poor, dispersed, neglected sheep of Israel during the time of their captivity, by referring to the shepherd-faithfulness of God. See also Micah vii. 14, and Ps. lxxx. 2, and xcv. 7. It is in obvious reference to these Old Testament passages, that our Saviour calls himself the Good Shepherd (John x.), and is also so called by the Apostles, 1 Peter ii. 25; v. 4; Heb. xiii. 20. All that Jehovah, under the Old Testament, does to his own, he does through his Angel and Mediator; this is his common aspect to his church. He—the λογος—appeared in flesh in Christ. Hence, whatever in the Old Testament was said of Jehovah and his Angel, is immediately transferred in the New to Christ. See the Christology, I. I. p. 247. The connection between the Old and New Testament, as regards this subject, is especially laid open in Zech xi. and xiii. 7, where *the angel of the Lord* is spoken of as the Shepherd of Israel, and his future incarnation in the midst of his sheep is mentioned. Compare the Christology on the passage, P. 2.—Still the question remains, On what foundation does the idea

expressed in the words, *the Lord is my Shepherd*, depend, in so far as the Psalm is in the first instance the expression of the feelings of the author, and of individual believers? The answer is this:—The *general* foundation for this conviction lies in the covenant of God with Israel, the promises of which every true and living member of the church is entitled to apply to himself. The *special* foundation lies in *personal experience*, such as that which was enjoyed by David in such abundant measure. How often did he experience this shepherd-faithfulness of God! How often did he enjoy from him quiet, quickening, protection, and blessings! It will not do to translate, *I shall not want*. The correct translation is, *I want nothing*. This, among other reasons, is obvious from the use of the preterite דשׁנת in verse 5. The development of an idea can give nothing except what is contained in the general statement. *I want nothing*, excludes want generally, and not merely that of food: compare the expansion of the idea, ver. 2—5, לא חסרת דבר, Deut. ii. 7, *thou hast lacked nothing*, Deut. viii. 9, *thou wantest nothing at all in it*, to which the Psalmist appears especially to allude, and Ps. xxxiv. 10, *they who seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*. This is evident also from the concluding verse, where the affirmative, *goodness and grace follow me*, corresponds to the negative here, *I want nothing*. We must not, on the other hand, extend arbitrarily the sphere of *I want nothing*, but must limit it as directed by the development of the expression, in which we read only of the blessings of life, and not of deliverance from spiritual trouble. We must not forget that the Psalmist (ver. 5,) sings in presence of his enemies, and consequently that he is congratulating himself only on such good things as *these* designed to deprive him of. The following is Luther's paraphrase: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall assuredly want nothing. I shall eat and drink, and have abundance of clothes, food, protection, peace, and necessaries of every kind which contribute to the support of life; for I have a rich shepherd, who will not allow me to suffer want. But he speaks particularly of spiritual blessings and gifts, which the word of God brings," &c. This, on the principles of strict grammatico-historical interpretation, is correct only till he comes to say, "But he speaks particularly," &c. The theological interpretation, however, will in this case undoubtedly break down the boundaries which the grammatico-historical has set up. For the view to which the Psalmist for a moment confines himself un-

doubtedly implies, that he who has made such abundant provision in lower matters, will not suffer any blessings of a higher kind to be withheld. Still we must not, like Umbreit, who finds at once that the words, *I want nothing*, express deliverance from all spiritual troubles, mingle up the results of the grammatical interpretation with the theological exposition. By so doing, we lose altogether an insight into the train of thought and structure of the Psalm, and rob it even of that practical power, from a false regard to which it is that such attempts are made.—The paraphrase of P. Gerhard forms the best commentary on the verse before us. "The Lord, who rules all the ends of the earth with his power—the fountain of eternal good—is my shepherd and guardian. So long as I have him, I am in want of no blessing, the riches of his fulness most completely replenish me."—Those who, on reading the words, *the Lord is my shepherd, I am in want of nothing*, are inclined to say, "How shall I know that the Lord is *my* shepherd? I do not find that he acts so friendly a part to me as corresponds to what the Psalmist says; nay, I have ample experience *to the very contrary;*" are directed by Luther in the following words into the right way: "The prophet has not at all times been so happy; he has not been able at all times to sing as he does here. He has at times been in want of much, yea almost of every thing. He has felt that he possessed neither the righteousness, nor the consolation, nor the help of God, but only sin, the wrath of God, terror and dismay, as he complains in many of his Psalms. Still, as often as he turns him from his own feelings, and lays hold of God by his promises, and thinks, "It may be with me as it may, yet this is the comfort of my heart, that I have a gracious, a compassionate Lord for my shepherd, whose word and whose promises strengthen and comfort me, therefore I shall be in want of nothing." And he has written this and other Psalms for the very purpose of assuring us that in real temptation there is no council, help, or comfort to be found, unless we have learned the golden art of holding firm by the word and promises of God, and deciding by them, in oppposition to the feelings of our own hearts. Thus assuredly shall help and comfort follow, and we shall be in want of nothing."

Ver. 2. *He layeth me down on the green meadows, he tendeth me by the waters of rest.* Luther: "The prophet has shortly expressed, in the first verse, the import of the whole Psalm, viz.

that whoever has the Lord for his Shepherd shall be in want of nothing. He attempts nothing more in the whole Psalm than to expand in fine glowing words and comparisons, how well it is with those who are the Lord's sheep." According to most interpreters, the green meadows, which are properly grass-pasturage, are introduced here in connection with the good pasture which they afford. But this view is opposed first, by, *he layeth me down,* second, by the parallel in the second clause, which speaks of rest for the weary; and, lastly, by the circumstance, that another verse, viz. the 5th one, is devoted to the care of the shepherd, as regards the providing of food. The green meadows serve another useful purpose beside that of pasturage; they form a pleasant place of repose, where the Eastern shepherd at noon, when the heat is at its height, permits his weary flock to lie down. Compare Song of Solomon, i. 7. Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 17) made booths for his sheep, when they were wearied with the long and severe travelling; in like manner the heavenly Shepherd gives delightful rest and repose to his spiritual sheep, when they are worn out with wandering under the burning heat of this world's sufferings and temptations. He sends to them times of health, that they may recruit their strength for wandering through the rough paths of life, till at last they are brought to that eternal rest, of which every season of temporary repose is, both to individuals and to the church as a body, a foretaste, a pledge, and a prophecy.—In the second clause, *the waters of rest* are generally interpreted as meaning *quiet or still water,*—" water which is not agitated, and therefore not dreaded by the sheep." Claus, however, has very improperly impugned this interpretation. The plural, certainly, is remarkable. Then the question occurs, can rest be attributed to water? There is at least no parallel passage. The parallelism with, *he layeth me down,* favours another interpretation: waters of rest=waters at which rest (properly rests) are enjoyed,—the plural indicating that the rest imparted is of a manifold kind, and respects not one gift, but a whole train of gifts. The Psalmist, as was perceived by the Septuagint translators, who have rendered מנוחות by ἀναπαύσεως, and by the Vulgate, who give " ad aquam refectionis," is speaking of the refreshing rest which shepherds, at the noon of a hot summer day, give to their wearied flocks at the side of a shady brook to which they have led them to drink. Compare Bocart, Herioz. i. p.

529. Luther: "David here speaks of this matter after the manner of the country. The country on which so many praises have been lavished, is a hot, dry, sandy rocky country, which has many deserts and little water. In our part of the world, we know nothing of this, for we find everywhere plenty of water. Hence David has seen, and he extols it as a great blessing, that he is under the protection of the Lord, who not only pastures him on green meadows, but also leads him during the heat to refreshing water." Hence, according to this view, the rest conveys the same idea as it does in all other passages: for example, 2 Sam. vii. 1, "when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him *rest* round about from all his enemies." 1 Chron. xxii. 9, "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of *rest;* and I will give him *rest* from all his enemies round about." Jeremiah xlv. 3, "I fainted in my sighing, and I find no *rest*," where the prophet complains that he could not find that which David here promises to all believers. Israel was led to waters of rest in the wilderness, when at the command of the Lord, repose and refreshment were granted them in some one of its more favoured spots: "the ark went before them, (Numbers x. 33,) to search out a *resting place* for them." The expression before us was fulfilled much more completely in Israel, when they were privileged to rest in Canaan from the hardships of their long wandering. Compare Deut. xii. 9; Psalm xxxvii. 11. David was led to waters of rest after the ruin of Saul, after his victory over his Gentile enemies, and after the suppression of Absalom's conspiracy. And it was fulfilled in the most complete manner in the case of Solomon, whose reign was a type of the rest of heaven to be enjoyed by the church triumphant. Innumerable times might David say, as he did in Psalm cxvi. 7, "Return unto thy *rest*, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—The נהל in Pihel should, according to the common acceptation, mean "to lead." Doubts on this point are raised by the use of the עַל here, and in the parallel passage, Isaiah xlix. 10. In Isaiah xl. 11, the idea of *leading* is scarcely suitable, and in 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, and in Genesis xlvii. 17, it is wholly incongruous. The sense of *tending*, in this passage absolutely necessary, is to be retained in all passages. In Ex. xv. 13, which alone appears to contradict this, *thou leadest through thy grace the people whom thou hast redeemed, and tendest them through thy power by thy holy habitation*, is to be

explained, *thou leadest them to thy holy habitation, and watchest over them there.* This interpretation is demanded by the עַל. In Genesis xxxiii. 14, the Hithpael form is used in the sense of *to take care of one's self.*—The import of the verse is therefore this:—the good shepherd, with tender care, imparts sweet repose to his weary sheep. To *the rest* which, according to our verse, is given to *the weary*, there is added *the revival*, suitably following in the next verse, which the good shepherd imparts *to the exhausted—to the fainting.* The extreme importance here attached to rest—its having assigned to it the first place in the enumeration of the good deeds of the good shepherd—indicates how severe the journey through this world is, how hot is the sun which shines over the righteous, so that the need for rest outweighs every other, and the righteous man is not more truly thankful for any blessing than for this one. The outward rest, moreover, of which our verse more immediately speaks, is, in reality, a blessing to him only who has been previously brought to that *inward* peace which, like an unperishable possession, accompanies the believer amid all outward distresses. This inward rest—this peace of the soul in God—gives a title, which never fails to be acknowledged by God, to the outward peace.

Ver. 3. *He revives my soul, he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.* On the first clause compare Ps. xix. 7: the import is—when my soul is exhausted and wearied, he revives me, as is the custom of the good shepherd, who not only cares for the *sound* sheep, but also and especially attends to the weak and the sick. The import of the *second* clause, is, *he sends me salvation, when, wearied with the rough paths of life, I am pressed down with suffering.* Several interpreters read it: "he leads me in an even path." But עֶדֶק never stands in a physical sense, for straightness; it means always righteousness. And this signification could only be considered as unsuitable from assuming the false position, that the Psalmist everywhere must use expressions that are borrowed from the relations connected with the figure which he is, for the time, employing in illustration of spiritual matters. This, however, is by no means a principle observed by the sacred poets in their use of figurative language. They are often satisfied with a very slight allusion to the natural relations. In the present instance, the corresponding idea is undoubtedly that of leading in even and quiet paths, in opposition to among thorns, and over stones,

and cliffs. The *righteousness* is not to be understood, as Michaelis would have it, in a moral sense—*that I may lead a holy and a pious life in this world*—but it is to be considered as a *gift of God*, which he imparts to his own—that practical justification or clearing up of the character which forms a part of the salvation. Salvation itself is never indicated by עדק, so that the exposition, *he leads me in the path of salvation*, must be rejected as not sufficiently exact. The clause, *for his name's sake*, is equivalent to, for the sake of his glorious being, because He is the Holy One, in the scriptural sense, (Ps. xxii. 3,) only so that at the same time it is shown that his glorious being has not remained *concealed*, but has been made fully known by deeds. The product and echo of these is the name:—so that the expression is the same as, *for the sake of his actually illustrated glory*, which forms the foundation on which rests the confidence of the Psalmist, that the Lord leads *him* in the paths of righteousness. *The name of God* is thus always used as the product of the development of the Divine being, as the concentration of the *deeds* of God. Thus, for example, Joshua ix. 9: "And they said unto him, From a very far country are thy servants come because of the *name* of the Lord thy God, for we have heard the *fame* of him, and all that he *did* in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites:" 1 Kings viii. 41, 42: "that cometh out of a far country for thy name sake: for they shall hear of thy great name and of thy strong hand, and thy stretched out arm:" Isaiah lxiii. 12: "who led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm dividing the waters before them to make to himself a glorious name." The exposition of Aben-Ezra and others, "that his name might be praised throughout the whole world, is to be rejected; as also that of Stier, "not for any merit of mine, but out of free grace." What the Lord *is* and *has done*, gives the Psalmist a warrant to something which he is to do for him. He has at all times cleared up the character of his people: for example in Egypt, when he caused the sun of his salvation to shine upon the darkness of the misery of his people. In like manner, he put matters right with Joshua, when he gave him the victory over his enemies, and he will not deny himself towards this his servant. *For his name's sake*, has a much more extended import for us than it had for David. For the name of God, during the lapse of time, has become infinitely more glorious. Between us and David, there lies a long succession of glorious

developments of the being of God, in imparting salvation to his own, both as individuals and in their collective capacity, every one of which gives us a new warrant.

Ver. 4. *Even when I walk in the valley of death-darkness, I fear no calamity: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.* Calvin: "As a sheep, when it wanders through rugged deserts and dark valleys, is secured by the mere presence of its shepherd against the assaults of wild beasts and other dangers, so does David here testify, that as often as he is in a situation of danger, he has a sufficient protection in the shepherd care of God. But now that God, in the person of the only begotten Son, has manifested himself as a shepherd, in a far clearer and more glorious manner than he did formerly to the fathers under the law, we do not sufficiently honour his protection, unless, with eye directed towards it, we trample all fear and danger under foot." Venema supposes that David overvalues here his confidence: his despondency at the time of Absalom, shows that his firmness was by no means so unwavering. Psalm xxx. 6, 7, might be adduced here, where David accuses himself of high-minded confidence. But this idea proceeds altogether upon a misunderstanding. David is not here praising himself: he is praising the Lord. In reality, *I fear no evil*, is identical with, *I* DARE *fear no evil*: and the Psalmist expresses himself in these words, only because for the moment his feeling corresponds to the reality. It is not on the feeling that he lays stress, but on the cause which had called it forth. The גַּם is: "*even* when in circumstances in which the shepherd care of God seems as if it had come to an end." We cannot, with most expositors, translate it, *though I even wandered*, but only *even when I wander*. The analogy of the other futures, and a glance at the history of the author, who had been obliged so often to wander through the valley of the shadow of death, show that the author is speaking, not of something imaginary, but of something real. Hitzig's version, *though I even wandered I would fear no evil*, brings us at once in an unpleasant manner out of the domain of experience in which the whole Psalm moves. *The death-darkness* is darkness of the thickest kind, such as prevails in the grave or in sheol. The expression is too strong to allow us to think of a valley surrounded by thick *forests*, and overhung by high hills: the darkness is that of midnight:—compare Jeremiah xiii. 16, "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he

cause darkness, and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death:"—all the more suitable that it is at night when the beasts go forth to their prey. The *valley* is particularly mentioned on account of the wood-clad surrounding hills, in which these beasts live. To such a valley of death-darkness there correspond to the spiritual sheep, seasons of great trouble, danger, and severe suffering. Compare Jeremiah ix. 1; Psalm xliv. 19. Luther: "As once our friends wandered in the valley at Augsburg." The רַע, properly *evil*, indicates, according to the connection, some fatal misfortune. This befals the wicked only. The sheep of the good shepherd stumble, but they do not fall. On the words, *for thou art with me*, Luther remarks, "this presence of the Lord cannot be discerned by the five senses, *but it is seen by faith*, which is confident of this, that the Lord is nearer to us than we are to ourselves." The *rod* and the *staff*, according to many interpreters, are to be regarded as the weapons with which the shepherd drives off the wild beasts. But they do not suit this purpose, they are too peaceable. They are rather here, as usually, to be considered as the instrument for guiding the sheep. In the dark night of suffering, the trembling soul derives comfort from the thought, that it is under *the guidance of the Lord*, that he has *led it into* its salvation, that *he protects it there*, and that he will *bring it out* at his own time. A look at the shepherd-staff of the Lord fills the soul with joy in the midst of pain. The following remark of De Wette is important: "the somewhat copious language, (two synonyms and the pronoun,) is intended to depict the repose of confidence." Luther: "David prescribes here to all Christians a common rule, that there is no other way or plan upon earth by which a man may be delivered from trouble of every kind, than to cast all his care upon the Lord, to lay hold of him by his word of grace, to hold this fast, and by no means to let it go. Whoever does this, shall be happy, be he in prosperity or adversity, be he in life or in death, he shall hold on to the end, and gain the victory over all—the devil, the world, and misfortune."

Ver. 5. *Thou spreadest before me a table in sight of mine enemies, thou anointest my head with oil,—my cup overflows.* The Psalmist had hitherto spoken of the provident care of the good shepherd, in removing the manifold miseries, pains, and sufferings, which this life brings with it—of the rest, the refreshing,

the consolation. All this is decidedly of a *negative* character. His language now rises higher. God not only helps his people *in* suffering, and *out of* suffering, he also bestows upon them a rich fulness of joy, he satisfies his children with the good things of his house. To these positive blessings, there corresponds, in the temporal shepherd, the provision of fodder and water made for the sheep. This, however, would have been too prosaic. The Psalmist hence depicts the shepherd-care of God in this respect by another figure, yet so as to keep as near as possible to the corresponding idea of the figure already employed. The blessings with which God satisfies the desires of his needy people, appear under the figure of a rich *feast* prepared for them. שלחן is not a table of any kind, but only one on which viands are spread. *In sight of my enemies*, is a very picturesque trait. They must look on quietly, how the table is spread, and how the Psalmist sits down at it. The grace of God towards his own, appears all the more glorious, that it breaks through all hindrances, makes its way through all the hostile efforts that are directed with a *ruinous* design against the righteous one, and leaves nothing for the enemies but a tormenting sight. The *anointing* with the oil of joy, Psalm xlv. 7, that is, the oil which is the symbolical expression of joy, is one of the necessary accompaniments of a festive and joyful entertainment.

Ver. 5. *Only goodness and love follow me all the days of my life; and I dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.* The conclusion assumes the general form of the introductory clause, and explains the figurative language employed throughout.. The אך has its customary import, *only* goodness—nothing else. There is an implied antithesis in *they follow me.* Stier: "as the enemies, out of malignity, so the goodness of God follows all my steps with blessings." Compare Psalm xxxiv. 14. The שבתי is, according to several interpreters, *I turn back.* But שוב with ב, never signifies to turn back, neither in 1 Kings ii. 33, nor in Hosea xii. 7: compare on the passage Ch. B. Michaelis. The character which is *general* throughout, and continues to be so in the first clause of this verse, and the joyful tone of the same, are also unfavourable to this view, which assumes that David composed this Psalm when excluded from the services of the sanctuary. And, finally, this view is opposed also by the parallel passages, particularly Deut. xxx. 20, and xxvii. 4. These parallel passages show also that the שבתי, notwithstanding its

Patach, instead of Chirek, must be taken as an infinitive, *my dwelling*, and not (as is the view adopted by others) as a preterite instead of וישבתי—an anomaly besides of much greater consequence than the one implied in the other interpretation. *Dwelling in the house of the Lord* is commonly understood as being equivalent to *undisturbed abiding in the temple*. But it is impossible that the expression can be applied to literally abiding in the external temple, and it is altogether arbitrary to substitute, as Gesenius does, *frequenting*, (frequentem adesse) instead of *abiding*. Moreover, the possibility opened up by God of frequenting the temple, if occurring at all in a Psalm which extols so well what is great and glorious in God, is least of all to be expected at the conclusion, where there ought to have come in some comprehensive significant expression, and where it serves no other purpose except to weaken the impression of the whole. As parallel to *goodness and love follow me all the days of my life*, the words, *I dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*, sound exceedingly feeble and cold, if they relate to a frequenting of the sanctuary. Finally, by adopting this exposition, we disjoin the expression from the fundamental passage, Deut. xxx. 20, "that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for this is thy life and the length of thy days, that thou dwell, לשבת, in the land, which the Lord sware unto thy fathers;" according to which we should expect such a designation of the enjoyment of the grace of God as should be as expressive and general as the dwelling in the land of the fathers. The foundation for the right exposition has been already unfolded at Ps. xv. We there saw that, according to the usage in the Psalms, to dwell in the house of the Lord is a figurative expression for confiding dependance on God, and for enjoyment of his grace, and that the righteous *always* dwell in the house of the Lord,—even when they are far absent from it in the body,—a figurative expression which has its foundation in the law, in which the holy tabernacle is designated as the tabernacle of meeting, of intercourse between God and his people. Thus interpreted, the words before us form really the focus in which the rays of the whole passage are concentrated. In reference to the whole church, they admit of being applied with truth even when it can be said "your house is left unto you desolate," Matt. xxiii. 38. For those, who at that time were thrust out of the house of God,

or rather were left alone in a house which had lost the indwelling of God, were those souls only who had been cut off from their people. The *true* members of the church remain always in the house not made with hands, the church, members of the household of God, Eph. ii. 19, and in the enjoyment of all the blessings of the house of God.

PSALM XXIV.

Most interpreters suppose that the Psalm was composed by David at the time when he brought the ark of the covenant to Mount Zion. Compare 2 Sam. vi. 1; 1 Chron. xv. Several Jewish interpreters, on the other hand, to whom Stier may be added, have supposed that David composed this Psalm for future use at the dedication of the temple, after he had received the revelation as to its site. De Wette has proposed an extension of this idea, viz. that the Psalm was composed at the dedication of the new temple under Solomon. But against this view, and in favour of the one first mentioned, the following weighty reasons may be urged. 1. The superscription assigns the Psalm to David. 2. If the Psalm be supposed to have reference to the dedication of the temple under Solomon, by the *everlasting gates* we can understand nothing else than the gates of the temple, for into none other did the ark of the covenant at that time enter. But the gates of the newly built temple could not possibly be called everlasting gates. The only expedient in this difficulty is to suppose that the everlasting refers to the future continuance of the gates. But no one would apply, simpliciter, the term everlasting to new gates which it was hoped would last for ever; the hope of everlasting endurance which Solomon (1 Kings viii. 13) expresses in reference to the whole temple cannot be thus simpliciter referred to any particular part of it; the connection requires that the predicate denote an already existing, a generally acknowledged excellence. As soon, however, as we refer the Psalm to the entrance of the ark of the covenant under David, every difficulty vanishes. The gates are then those of Mount Zion. These might correctly be called ancient, for Jerusalem, with its strong Mount Zion, was already in the time of Abraham a city of the Canaanites. With the Psalmist, however, whose object it was to extol the worth of the gates, for the

purpose of enhancing the glory of the entrant, of whom, after all, the gates were unworthy, the idea of antiquity would easily expand in feeling into that of eternity. 3. In the appellations given to God, *the Lord strong and a hero, the Lord a warlike hero*, we clearly discern the voice of the warrior and the conqueror, David, who had so often, in the heat of battle, sought and obtained help from the Lord. Solomon would have chosen some other mode of expression, inasmuch as God had stood prominently forth on his behalf, under other aspects. 4. The fifteenth Psalm is so strikingly allied to the one before us, that the grounds which were there sufficient to establish, without a doubt, the authorship as that of David, particularly the expression "in thy tabernacle," are of equal weight here. The nineteenth Psalm also, which was composed by David, is allied to the one before us. There, as here, the greatness of God, as the Lord of the world, serves in the introduction only as the ground-work of what forms the peculiar object of the Psalmist.—Lastly, the idea that this Psalm is to be considered as a song of victory for the return of the ark of the covenant from a battle, is to be utterly rejected. This view would scarcely harmonize with the second part, for there the language employed refers to the *coming*, not to *the returning* of the Lord, and the call to the gates to open, proceeds on the supposition that the Lord is entering in through them for the first time, and appears unsuitable if he had frequently gone out and in on former occasions. But the first part is wholly unintelligible on this supposition. The question, *who will ascend to the hill of the Lord, and who will stand in his holy place?* would, on any such occasion, be altogether out of place, while, on the occasion which we have supposed, it would be highly suitable. It served at the commencement of a new state of things, to fix the fact of the change, and to bring it before the minds of the people; it served to furnish a counterpoise to the outward pomp which accompanied the bringing in of the ark of the covenant; it served to indicate that real—not mere outward—fellowship with a God such as this,—the Lord of the whole earth, —and participation in his blessings, are to be obtained only in *one* way, that of true righteousness: it served to indicate to the people the high seriousness of the claims upon the subjects, as seen in connection with the glory of the King who is entering in. This Psalm, which according to ver. 7—10, must have been sung at the entrance itself, is the earliest, in point of date, of

the sacred songs which were composed with this view. The fifteenth followed at a later period.

The contents are as follows: Jehovah is *God* in the full sense, the *Lord*, because the *Creator*, of the whole earth, v. 1, 2. Who then will, in truth, ascend the hill of the Lord, and stand in his holy place? Who will dwell *spiritually* beside him, in the newly-erected holy place, and receive from him blessing, salvation, and righteousness? Not at all the posterity of Jacob according to the flesh, as such,—this would be a wretched family for such a King and God,—but only he who, in thought, word, and deed, is pure and without spot. It is only those, who bear this character, that constitute Jacob,—the true people of the Lord,—and not the rude crowd who falsely bear the name, v. 3—6. The ark of the covenant has now approached the gates. These, poetically personified, are commanded to open, that the glorious King, that the Lord, rich in help for his people, that the God of the world, may enter in, ver. 7—10.

Ewald has advanced the hypothesis, that the Psalm was made up of two odes which were originally distinct, v. 1—6, and v. 7—10. But the chief reason which led him to adopt this hypothesis, namely, the want of connection and unity between the two parts, disappears entirely on closer investigation. The glory of the approaching Lord is, in both parts of the Psalm, the fundamental idea. From this proceeds, in the first part, the demand for holiness, and, in the second, the command, addressed in form to the gates, but in reality to the hearts of his people, to open. The original connection of the two parts with each other is seen in this, that the Psalm concludes as it began, with the praise of God as the God of the whole earth, and assuredly therefore in this, that the beginning and the conclusion are supplemented v. 1, Jehovah, the Lord of the whole *earth*, in v. 10, Jehovah, the Lord of the *heavenly hosts*.

The coming of the Lord of glory, the high demands upon his people proceeding from this, the absolute necessity to prepare worthily for his arrival, form the subject-matter of the Psalm. It admits of applications far beyond the special occasion which called it forth. The Lord may be conceived of as constantly coming, in relation both to his church collectively, and to his people individually. And his people therefore ought to be continually preparing to give him a suitable reception. Hence it follows that the Messianic interpretation, which in former times

was so very prevalent, has an important element of truth in it. The coming of God to his kingdom took place in a manner infinitely more real at the appearance of Christ than it did at the entrance of the ark of the covenant. That lower occurrence was only the *shadow*, but the *body* was in Christ. At this truly real coming, which has different gradations,—the coming in humility, the coming in spirit, and the coming in glory,—the *demands* rise in proportion to the greater reality. The question, "who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?" becomes more solemn, and the command, "Lift up your heads, ye gates," is given in a louder tone.

Venema saw clearly that the idea that the Psalm was sung by alternate choruses is altogether without foundation. The questions, (ver. 7—10,) on which alone this idea rests, like the question in ver. 3, and in Ps. xv. 1, are to be considered simply as interrogatory clauses.

The reason why this Psalm has been placed in immediate juxtaposition to the 23d, will appear on comparing ver. 3, here, with ver. 6 there. The 23d Psalm concludes with the hope of dwelling for ever in the house of the Lord, and the Psalm before us begins, after some clauses of a preparatory and introductory nature, with the question, "who is qualified to dwell with God on his hill, and in his holy place?" The connection between the two Psalms is so interwoven with the sense, that their juxtaposition cannot be attributed to the collector. The probability is exceedingly strong, that David, from the beginning, united them as one pair, and that the 23d Psalm also was composed on the occasion of the removal of the ark of the covenant. For the purpose of preventing the hypocrites from appropriating to their use what does not belong to them, he follows up his expression of inward confidence in God, with a representation of those demands of a moral nature which God makes upon his people. The Shepherd of Israel is also the Almighty God. Wo to him who trusts in his grace without being holy as he is holy! We have already shown that the 15th Psalm, which is closely allied to the one before us, stands in a similar relation to the 14th.

Ver. 1. *The earth is the Lord's, and that which fills it, the world and those who dwell upon it.* The God, who is in a peculiar sense the God of Israel, is, at the same time, the Lord of the whole earth, and the sovereign proprietor of all things. With what

holy reverence must the subjects of such a king be filled! What high demands must be made upon them! With other gods there may be an animal love and a favouritism for their own worshippers, without regard to their hearts and lives, but the God of Israel,—who is God in the true sense of the word,—cannot, without absurdity, be spoken of as having connection with any except with such as are of a pure heart. The exhortation in Deut. x. 14, to circumcise the heart, is like the one before us, enforced by the consideration that Jehovah is, the Lord of heaven and earth, and that he regardeth not persons, nor taketh rewards. אֶרֶץ denotes the earth in general: תֵּבֵל properly the bearing,—the third fut. of יָבַל, *it bears*,—the fruit-bearing part of the earth, the οἰκουμένη. Hence the *fulness* is properly applied to the earth, and the inhabitants specially to תֵּבֵל.

Ver. 2. *For he has founded it above the seas, and made it fast above the floods.* That the earth is the Lord's, with all that fills it, and with its inhabitants, is founded on this, that he alone has made it a dry, fruitful, inhabitable earth, and that he preserves it such. Without him, the waters would yet, or again cover it as they did at the beginning. "Above the seas," "above the floods," imply that it stands at a higher level, so that it is not immersed below the sea. Compare the examples of עַל in similar connections in Ges. Thes. p. 1026. Many expositors apply "the seas," and "the floods," to the great subterraneous cavities which stand in connection with the mundane sea,—to the great deep, which, according to Gen. vii. 11, was broken up at the deluge. "Nothing but the almighty power of God could found the earth on such weak materials." But these interpreters do not observe, that at ver. 1, it is only the inhabited and replenished earth that is spoken of, and, consequently, that it can only be such an act of God, as has made and preserves the earth fruitful and habitable, that can be referred to here: the earth, with its fulness and its inhabitants, belongs to the Lord, for he has made it habitable and fruitful, and he preserves it in this condition. The reference to an occult doctrine of a physical character, to which allusion is made only in one single passage of Scripture, and that too in a very obscure and doubtful manner, would not be at all suitable in this passage. The Psalmist evidently refers to some act of God, which is generally known, and frequently spoken of in Scripture. Further, it may be objected to this view, that יַמִּים is *seas*, and נְהָרוֹת

floods, and that though the singular יָם might denote the subterraneous water, the plural, as Luther has observed, cannot. Finally, it will not do to tear the passage from its connection with the fundamental passage, Genesis i. 9, 11, to which it manifestly refers, and from the parallel passages, Ps. cxxxvi. 6, "who stretches out the earth above the waters," where everything preceding and following stands in obvious reference to Genesis i., Psalm cvi., where in like manner the dividing between the land and the sea comes in, in exact accordance with Genesis and Job xxxviii. 8, where it is mentioned as one of the most wonderful works of God, that "he hath set for the sea bars and doors, and hath shut it in within firm bounds." These observations will, we think, be sufficient to set aside for ever the idea of the subterranean waters.—The change of the mode is not unworthy of notice: יסדה refers to the *creation*, יכוננה to the *preservation*. Luther: "for it proceeds from the great power of God, that those cities and countries which are situated on seas and rivers, are not destroyed and torn to pieces." He has founded it above the seas and floods, and he keeps it fast above them.

Ver. 3. *Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, and who shall abide in his holy place?* This question has for its foundation, the statements of ver. 1 and 2, and the sense is correctly given by several interpreters: "who, *then*, shall ascend?" "Is the Lord such a mighty One?" "Who, then, can well be admitted into his holy and glorious presence?" The common translation is, who *dare* ascend into the hill of the Lord, who is worthy to do so? But, on comparing Ps. xv., it becomes obvious that we must keep to the usual sense of the future. Zion is not for all, the hill of the Lord; the temple is not for all, his holy place. To Zion, to the outward temple, all might get who had good bones, but to the hill of the Lord, to his holy place, as sure as he is Lord of the whole earth, none get except those who are of a pure heart. They dwell there, always with him, even when, in a bodily sense, they are absent. On the other hand, the ungodly, even though they can boast of being the seed of Abraham, even though they are indefatigable in their observance of the ceremonies, are, even when present, nevertheless absent:—they walk only on the common ground of the earth, God shuts them out from his holy presence. That we must interpret the passage in this way, and that the ascending of the hill of the Lord,

and the standing in his holy place, are only figurative expressions of gracious relationship to him (Mich.: "as a true member of the holy church, and a denizen of his kingdom,") is evident from the parallel, ver. 5. The "who shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation," is expository of "who shall ascend." To ascend the hill of God is to *begin* to walk with God, to abide in his holy place is constantly to remain in his presence. קוּם is not "to stand:"—that is עמד: the passages which Gesenius adduces to prove this are not sufficient—but "to abide."—Luther: "to this question the haughty self-righteous return answer at once, we, we are worthy, especially the Jews. For from the beginning of the world there have been two kinds of those who profess to be seeking after God, yea, there still are and there will be till the end of time. The first are those who serve God without heart, without grace, without spirit, and only by external works, ordinances, sacrifices, and ceremonies. Thus Cain offered his gift, but kept back his heart and his person." The design of the Psalmist, however, is to repulse hypocrites, and to bring the self-deceivers to serious thought, while he answers the above question, by declaring that as sure as the God of Israel is the God of the whole earth, is God in the true and full sense of the word, so sure can only the pure in heart and conduct stand before him. Luther, in the style of true theological exposition: "It is not he who sings so well or so many Psalms, nor he who fasts and watches so many days, nor he who divides his own among the poor, nor he who preaches to others, nor he who lives quietly, kindly, and friendly; nor, in fine, is it he who knows all sciences and all languages, nor he who works all virtuous and all good works that ever any man spoke or read of, but it is he alone, who is pure within and without."

Ver. 4. *He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who draws not his soul unto vanity, nor swears deceitfully*, ver. 5. *He shall draw the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from God his Saviour.* The import is this; he, and he only, shall ascend the holy hill of the Lord, and abide in his holy place:—this is what is meant by, *shall draw the blessing, &c.*—The Psalmist unites cleanness of hands and purity of heart. The hands are the instruments of action, the heart the seat of feeling. God's demands upon his people go beyond the domain of action. Those only see him, (and that is altogether the same as what is im-

plied here, in *ascending the hill of the Lord, and abiding in his holy place,*) who have a pure heart. The Psalmist in the first clause ascends from outward deeds to the heart, and in the second he descends from the heart to the tongue,—*he who shuns sin in thought, word, and deed.* We have here the same threefold division which obtains in the decalogue: *deed,* "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal;" *word,* "Thou shalt not bear false witness;" *thought,* "Thou shalt not covet." But the heart is put here in the second place, for the purpose of showing that everything ultimately is dependent on it,—that purity of hands and tongue has its root in purity of heart, and is important only in so far as it is rooted there. The expression נשא נפש is not a singular one; it occurs Deut. xxiv. 15, Prov. xix. 18, Ps. xxv. 1, lxxxvi. 4, cxliii. 8, with this difference, that it is construed in these passages with אל, and here with ל. The construction with ל here limits the application of the expression. The common translation is, "to lift up the soul." But for this sense the ל is not suitable. We cannot say, "to lift up his soul to falsehood." The ל rather demands the signification, *to draw, to draw to,*—"where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,"—so that on comparing Ex. xx. 7, and the נשא in verse 5, it is evident that this is the true rendering of our passage,—*he who does not draw his soul to falsehood, he shall draw down,* and at the same time in all other passages. Several interpreters render שוא by "vanity" or "wickedness;" Meyer, "bad ways;" Stier, "everything which the heart makes an idol of instead of the true God;" and some, "idols" in the proper sense. But if we observe the relation in which לשוא stands to למרמה, it will appear obvious that we can only translate "to falsehood and deceit." This translation also will be at once recognized as the correct one, in Ex. xx. 7:—"who hath no love for falsehood and deceit, and who, in consequence of this, does not swear deceitfully."—After the example of Stange, many interpreters render, "who does not utter his person to a lie," that is, "who does not misuse the name of God to confirm a lie," and refer to Ex. xx. 7, לא תשא את שם יהוה אלהיך לשוא, which they render "thou shalt not utter the name of the Lord thy God to confirm a lie." But this interpretation depends upon the marginal reading, נפשי, *my soul,* which is decidedly to be rejected, as God is not introduced speaking throughout the whole Psalm. It is now, therefore,

very easy to dispose of this view: the soul of the Lord cannot stand for his person, nor this for his name; the phrase נשא נפש has constantly the sense of "to draw the soul:" נשא here, from the ישא in verse 5, must signify "to draw," and never signifies "to utter" (compare on Ps. xv. 3); the connection between נפשׁו and לבב, and the obvious opposition between the soul and the tongue, render it impossible to refer נפשׁו to God. It is more seasonable to point out the *truth* from which the false reading and exposition have proceeded. This is the position, that the words before us have a reference to Ex. xx. 7. The resemblance is so striking, that any exposition which would tear asunder that connection, can scarcely be recognised as the correct one. According to our interpretation, however, this connection becomes most manifest, as soon as the passage in Exodus is correctly translated. It must be translated: "thou shalt not draw down the name of the Lord to a lie," *i. e.* thou shalt not mix up his name with what is false, thou shalt not utter it to confirm a lie. The Psalmist, by the verbal reference which he makes to the passage, indicates that this bringing down of one's soul to a lie—the having a pleasure in it—is the ground and fountain of bringing down God's name to a lie, and that this last sin is the natural consequence of the first. The only sure preservative against the fearful sin of perjury, is heart-abhorrence of deceit and falsehood.—In ver. 5, *he shall draw down the blessing*, we may observe, with Amyrald, a tacit refutation of the idea, that there was something of efficacy in the priestly and the royal benedictions, apart from the moral condition of those upon whom that blessing was pronounced. When the ark of the covenant was brought in, David blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts (2 Sam. vi. 18). *The righteousness*, in parallel with *the blessing*, is the blessing itself, inasmuch as it is the clearing up of the character grounded on fact, the answer of God to the subjective righteousness of the worshipper: compare 1 Kings viii. 31, 32. This righteousness, as the gift of God, is carefully to be distinguished from justification. The justification of a sinner before God *goes before* holiness, the righteousness here spoken of *follows* it. Finally, the purity which the Psalmist here speaks of as the indispensable condition of salvation, is not to be understood as a perfect, spotless holiness. It is enough that the innermost intent of the soul—the spiritual eye of Matt. vi. 23,—be pure. But, assuredly, as the *condition* of salvation is

always imperfect in this life, so is the salvation itself in like manner imperfect.

Ver. 6. *This is the generation which reverences him, who seek thy face, are Jacob.* The Psalmist having defined those to whom access to God has been opened up, brings prominently forward once more the truth that they, and they only, are real worshippers of God, and therefore sharers in his grace, members of his church. The name, *those who seek the Lord,* (the textual reading דֹּרְשָׁו being obviously a contraction for the marginal דֹּרְשָׁיו, which ought to be rejected) circulated, as it appears, like a coin, and the whole people were wont to apply to themselves this name. But the Psalmist limits the use of it to those only to whom it properly belongs. That man only deserves this name, who fulfils the law of God. That only can be called a reverencing of God, which is concerned about purity of heart.—*To see the face of the Lord,* is to be a sharer in his favour; and, therefore, *to seek the face of the Lord,* is to be concerned about his favour, sincerely to strive to please him. This striving is made known in earnest endeavours to obtain purity of heart, as the only means of seeing God, of pleasing him. Jacob stands for the generation of Jacob. The reason why Jacob and not Israel is used, is obvious from the opposition implied to the prevailing opinion of the times. The people put great stress upon their descent from Jacob, and supposed descent from Jacob according to the flesh, and incorporation with the people of the covenant to be identical. In opposition to this, the Psalmist remarks, that only those who are earnest in their pursuit after holiness, according to the good pleasure of God, are the true posterity of Jacob, and form the people of the covenant, who are under the dominion of grace. The others, notwithstanding their descent from Jacob, belong not to Jacob, but are heathen and children of wrath. We may compare, on this point, those passages in which the ungodly members of the church, in contempt of their pretensions, founded on mere external relationship, are addressed as heathen, as uncircumcised, or specially as Canaanites, or by the name of some other of the heathen nations: Jeremiah iv. 4; ix. 25; Isa. i. 10; Ez. xvi. 3, see also the Christol. Part 2, p. 398. In the New Testament, Rom. ix. 6, 7 is exactly parallel: "for they are not all Israel which are of Israel." The sudden address directed to God, *who seek thy face,* gives additional emphasis

to the declaration, which is uttered as it were in the presence of God.—According to Stier and others, the true Israel are here put in the room of those who are descended from Jacob, according to the flesh:—"whoever, among all nations, inquires after God, shall receive the blessing of Abraham, and shall be held as belonging to Jacob." But, in reality, we have here nothing more than a preliminary step to the idea, "among all nations this is the generation," &c.,—nay, we have not even that. The only distinction drawn is one among the natural descendants of Jacob, and the only opinion refuted is this, that the grace of God is given along with descent from Jacob, and to every one of his lineal posterity.—The exposition which, to the destruction of the parallelism, understands Jacob as in apposition, is to be rejected as harsh and forced: "this, the generation of his worshippers, those who seek thy face, Jacob, that is, the true descendants of Jacob:"—the address to God is here rendered altogether intolerable. The same remark may be made on the interpretation, "who seek thy face, O Jacob, *i.e.* O God of Jacob," and on the supposition which has been made, that אלהי has dropped out of the text.

Ver. 7. The procession, with the ark of the covenant, has approached Mount Zion. The Psalmist addresses its gates, and commands them to open, that the glorious king may enter in. *Lift up ye gates your heads, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come.* The King of glory is the glorious, majestic king. What, in the first instance, is only a poetical figure, becomes, within the spiritual domain, a reality. What the external *gates* would have done if they had been endued with reason, will in reality be performed by *hearts* which are capable of comprehending the majesty and the glory of the approaching king. Here the doors and gates will in reality open. They will give to the king that wide and ready entrance, which once they gave to the world and to sin. This application, which indeed is more than an application,—is really an exposition,—is pointed out by the circumstance, that the command to open is referred back to its *why* given by the Psalmist himself. —Along with the ark of the covenant, the Lord also came in all the fulness of his glory, and with all the riches of his grace and justice: compare in reference to the import of the ark of the covenant, Num. x. 35, 36; Christology, P. 3, p. 523, &c. It was not the mere change of place of a symbol that was then cele-

brated: it was the bringing in of a new era in the relationship of God to his people; and the Psalmist took occasion to exhort the people to know the time of their visitation. Long had the ark of the covenant been, as it were, resting in the grave: compare the Beitr. P. 3, p. 48. And now that it rose out of it, now that the Lord intended to make his habitation among his people, it was of great consequence for them to receive him in a worthy manner, that so his arrival might bring upon them not a curse but a blessing.

Ver. 8. *Who is he, the King of glory? The Lord, strong and a warrior, the Lord mighty in battle.* It is certainly more natural and more pleasant, to suppose that a second chorus here falls in with the question, than to imagine that the Psalmist leaves the gates to put the question. Even this supposition, however, is unnecessary. The question is of the same kind with those in verse 3, and Ps. xv. 1, and is equivalent to, "Askest thou who he is?" It is intended merely to awaken attention. Venema: "the inhabitants of Zion were thereby instructed to contemplate with deep seriousness the properties of the king." The מִי in the question has, according to several interpreters, the character of an adverb, "who is there?" and therefore it stands without the article, and forward. Compare Ewald's Small Grammar, § 446. Others again consider it as a real pronoun. In reference to the answer, Calvin has the following very important remark: "the glorious appellations by which the Psalmist extols the power of God, are intended to show to the people of the covenant that God does not sit idly in the temple, but that he is prepared to help his people, and to stretch out his strong hand to preserve and to save them." Israel, surrounded by mighty nations, and as yet a small people, could found his hope of safety only on the help of his heavenly conquering king. Compare Ex. xv. 3, Numb. x. 35, 36, and 1 Sam. xvii. 45, where David says to Goliath, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel," and ver. 47, "the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."

Ver. 9. *Lift up your heads, ye doors, and lift them up ye everlasting gates, that the King of glory may come.*" The demand is repeated, with a slight alteration, for the purpose of bringing after it a second question, as the first answer had not represented with sufficient fulness the majesty of the King of glory.

Ver. 10. *Who is he, the King of glory? The Lord, the Lord*

of Hosts, he is the King of glory. Several interpreters, and latterly Köster, interpret *the Lord of Hosts* as equivalent to *the God of battle.* But the parallelism to which they appeal in favour of this entirely arbitrary exposition, is decidedly against it. The "Lord of hosts" must necessarily go beyond the contents of ver. 8. For, otherwise, no reason can be assigned for the repetition of the question. The new idea in the contents of verses 9th and 10th, is, *that the God who, in the 8th verse, is represented as the hero of the earth, as the God of the earthly hosts,* (Israel had been, even in the pentateuch, spoken of as the hosts of the Lord, צבאות יהוה, Ex. xii. 41,) *is also the God of the heavenly hosts.* He cannot be the first, in the right and full sense, unless he is also the second, just as he cannot in the full sense be the God of Israel, unless he is also the God of the world. What God is on earth depends upon what he is in heaven. If he has any who are equal to him there, he is not in the full sense the King of glory upon earth. The conclusion thus comes back to the opening strain of the Psalm, where the Lord, in like manner, had been praised as the God of the world: and the whole Psalm, which was intended to call the church to a living contemplation of the glory of her approaching God, concludes with that appellation of God which reflects this glory most clearly: Michaelis: plus enim et majus et brevius quid dicere de eo vobis non possum.—The *hosts* are always *heavenly,* and not *created things* generally. For in the passage Genesis ii. 1, *the heaven and the earth* is especially to be regarded as equivalent to *the whole world,* and the hosts belong to it, according to that passage, only in one of its two parts. The *heavens and the earth* is unquestionably used in the sense of *the universe* in Gen. ii. 4, where man is spoken of as the product of the heavens and the earth. Just as in the second passage we find attributed to the heavens what belongs exclusively to the earth, so in the first mentioned passage, there is attributed to the earth what belongs only to the heavens. The heavenly hosts are divided into spiritual hosts—the angels, and material—the stars. No one passage represents the angels as in closer connection with the stars, than what implies that they together make up the heavenly hosts, and the confident assertion of Gesenius: "quippe quas (the stars) ab angelis geniisque cœlestibus habitatas esse existimarent," must be rejected as altogether without foundation. This appellation is, throughout, peculiarly and usually connect-

ed with the sun, moon, and stars, on account of the opposition implied to the prevailing Sabeanism,—which contributed very much to raise the name *Jehovah Sabaoth* to this sense.—We cannot translate with Gesenius and others, *Jehovah of hosts*, but *Jehova, of hosts:* the general idea God must be drawn out from the Jehova, as has been adverted to in the Christology, P. 3, p. 218. The reasons are these, 1. יהוה is never used as a proper noun in the *status constructus*. 2. יהיה אלהים צבאות occurs in several passages, as Ps. lix. 6; lxxx. 5. 3. אדני צבאות occurs in Isa. x. 16. 4. Κύριος σαβαώθ occurs in the Septuagint, and in Rom. ix. 29, and James v. 40, which shows that in a certain manner the צבאות was regarded as standing by itself. On the other hand, those who would isolate Sabaoth *completely*, and maintain that it is to be considered just as a name of God, as Baumgarten has recently done, require to be reminded that it never occurs except in connection with one of the names of God. —In the Pentateuch (Gen. ii. 1) there is to be found the origin of the appellation, but not the appellation itself. That this is not to be attributed to design on the part of the author, (as might be said in the case of Ezekiel and Job,) but is to be explained by the assumption that the word had not yet come into use, is evident from the fact that it does not occur either in Joshua or Judges. It would certainly be a very singular circumstance that the word should be omitted designedly in the three most ancient historical books.

PSALM XXV.

The Psalm begins and concludes with the prayer for *deliverance from enemies:* and this is to be considered as its peculiar theme. The *forgiveness of sins* which the Psalmist frequently speaks of in the middle, is introduced as the ground of the deliverance. But of *moral strength* there is no mention made throughout the Psalm.

There are no traces in the contents of any particular occasion for which the Psalm might be composed; and the prayer on behalf of Israel at the close, is altogether unfavourable to any such. For the transition from the individual to the whole body is much easier when the Psalm has, for its object beforehand, to awaken the godly, when they are pressed hard by their enemies,

to hope in the guidance and protection of God. Lastly, the form in which the Psalm is composed is decidedly against any particular reference. The alphabetical arrangement, which obtains here as in Ps. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxi. cxii. cxix. cxlv., is throughout adopted in Psalms which are general in their character, and seems, from its nature, to be suitable only for such.

The superscription announces that David is the author, and with this announcement the contents of the Psalm are fully accordant. David was peculiarly exposed to sufferings, arising from enemies, throughout a great part of his life; and he always treats this subject with peculiar delight, regarding it, as he seems to have done, as the main duty of his life to comfort others with the same consolation wherewith he himself had been comforted of God. But the alphabetical arrangement has been pleaded as furnishing some ground for doubt on this point: "this conceit belongs to a later age of degenerate taste." This might with as much propriety be said of such poems as "*befiel du deine wege*" of P. Gerhardt, and "*wie schön leucht uns der Morgenstern*" of Nikolai, because these poems are characterised by such conceits as might not have been expected in such eminent and powerful writers. One single superscription, prefixed to an alphabetical Psalm, is entitled to more weight than this *a priori* assertion. And there are several such superscriptions. And, besides, there are at least two alphabetical Psalms, the ix. and x., which from internal evidence of the strongest kind, we know were composed by David. Lastly, we deny that the alphabetical arrangement ought to be termed "conceit." It belongs in general to those means which have been adopted for the purpose of giving to poetical compositions that character of *compactness* which so essentially belongs to them, and it stands on the same footing exactly with the parallelism of clauses, and the strophe arrangement. It can deserve to be called a conceit only when it is forced upon resisting materials, (its use being, from the nature of the case, confined within a narrow compass,) or when it is employed in a composition which requires a strict progression of thought and feeling. It occurs, however, at least when strictly adhered to, only in a particular class of Psalms, those namely in which the effort is obvious to arrange a collection of individual sayings, which, from beginning to end, bear upon the same subject, but are presented in different aspects, and always with new applications. For such Psalms, the alphabetical ar-

rangement, the procession of thought throughout the whole alphabet, the symbol of completeness and compactness is exceedingly natural. De Wette indeed maintains that the want of connection is the consequence, not the cause of the alphabetical arrangement. But on this supposition there are certain obvious matters of fact which are not explained: the alphabetical arrangement does not so completely stand in the way of the connection, as to render abortive every attempt, however zealous, to unite them together. But in the Psalms no such effort is at all conspicuous. The writers of the Psalms were under the less necessity of sacrificing the connection for the sake of the alphabetical arrangement, that they make a much freer use of it than is observed to have been done among other nations. From the same fact the objection of conceit or constraint may be the more easily set aside. Even within its own peculiar province, the alphabetical arrangement is pursued only in so far as it can be done without any constraint. How little force then there is in what has been said of the alphabetical arrangement, that it corresponds to a marked deficiency, is evident from the fact, that we find it adopted by very different nations, and always in poetry of a particular kind.

Nothing beyond this, of any consequence, has been adduced against considering David as the author of the Psalm. For example, it has been said that the prayer at the close of the Psalm, for deliverance for Israel out of all his troubles, does not correspond to the time of David. But it need scarcely be remarked, that at all times, even the most prosperous, there is enough of trouble, and that our assuming David to be the author of the Psalm, does not necessarily imply, that we limit its application to the circumstances of his day.

The low opinions which have been formed as to the merits of the Psalm, proceed from misunderstanding its peculiar character and design. As an alphabetical Psalm it is beautiful, and whoever reads it in the frame of mind in which an alphabetical Psalm ought to be read, will find it to be both beautiful and edifying.

The alphabetical arrangement in our Psalm is not strictly adhered to. The second verse begins, like the first, with א, and the ב follows at the second word. The ו is either omitted, or it occurs, not at the beginning, but at the middle of the verse. The ק is altogether wanting. On the other hand, there are two

verses which begin with ר. After the last letter ת, there is a verse beginning with פ. A great many critics, up to Hitzig and Ewald, have considered it necessary to remove these irregularities by emendations. But there are many very weighty reasons to be urged against every such attempt. 1. Errors of this kind in alphabetical Psalms are extremely unlikely to occur: the opposite may be expected, viz. alterations made by transcribers, with a view to remove irregularities. 2. Such irregularities occur in all the alphabetical Psalms without exception. 3. There are *gradations* among the deviations in particular Psalms: first, there are cases in which only a single irregularity occurs, and where of course, a critical emendation might, with some appearance of propriety, be made; second, there are cases, such as Ps. ix. and x., in which nothing more than an attempt at alphabetical arrangement seems to have been made, and which utterly defy all efforts of emendatory criticism; and lastly, there are cases in which the alphabetical arrangement is directed, not so much to the *first word* as to the *number* of the verses. The extensive deviations indicate, that the minor ones are original, and to be attributed to the author himself. 4. There are special reasons in the Psalm before us, why no alterations should be attempted. The omission of the ק is evidently not accidental, as its place is occupied by ר, the letter following it in the alphabet: the author did not succeed to his mind either with the ק or the ר, and it is as clear as day that he sacrificed the form to the sense. The first and the last verses are peculiar, inasmuch as they consist each of only one clause, while all the other verses contain two; they thus stand out, as it were, from the train, for the purpose of being recognised as the beginning and the end. And it is natural that they preserve this character, also in reference to the alphabetical arrangement. The א, although it begins verse 1st, yet as if this were treated in a certain measure, as accidental, is repeated at the beginning of the proper series, in verse 2, in such a manner, however, as that while it gets, as it were, what is its due, it has not a whole verse devoted to it, for ב follows in the second word; the last verse again, which begins with its פ, (instead of which any other letter would have answered equally well,) stands altogether out of the alphabetical arrangement. Hitzig's attempt to join the אֱלֹהַי of verse 2 to verse 1st, proceeds from an entire misapprehension of this correspondence between the beginning and the end of the Psalm; the same

remark may be made on his singular hypothesis in reference to the ם.

Ver. 1. *To thee, O Lord, I draw my soul.* The drawing of the soul to the Lord,—נשא נפש, means always to draw the soul, to draw towards, never *to lift*, compare Ps. xxiv. 4, and Deut. xxiv. 15,—signifies the longing of the heart after him. The soul is wherever the object of its regard is. The more immediate object which the Psalmist has in view becomes obvious in the following verse, where we find him speaking *of seeking help* from the Lord. Hence the longing after God, here spoken of, is the longing after him, as the Saviour, the helper in all trouble: compare Ps. cxliii. 8, where the drawing of the soul to God stands in parallel with trusting in him, "Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust, cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I draw my soul to thee." The Psalmist says, that when in distress, he does not, like the ungodly, draw his soul, at one time, in this direction, and at another time in that, that he does not seek to catch now at this, now at that *ignis fatuus* of human help, but that he goes straight with all his desire to God, and that he rests in his protection. In the form of an affirmation there is in reality an exhortation expressed: *I draw*, which is put into the mouth of the sufferer, in whose name the Psalmist speaks, contains *draw* in it. The lively and undivided desire for the help of the Lord, is the indispensable condition, and at the same time the sure ground of deliverance.

Ver. 2. *My God, I trust in thee, may I not be put to shame, may not mine enemies rejoice over me.* The import is, "*therefore*, may I not," &c. The trust in God of this verse corresponds to the drawing the soul to him of the preceding verse. The Psalmist grounds his prayer for deliverance on the general truth, that that man shall not be put to shame who hopes in God: the maxim, "that whoever puts his confidence in God shall not be forsaken," is the ground of his hope, his confidence, and his joy. This maxim, from which he draws an inference applicable to his special case, is expressly announced in v. 3.

Ver. 3. *Yea, all who wait on thee, shall be kept from being put to shame, those shall be put to shame who act perfidiously without cause.* The *waiting* corresponds to the *drawing* of the soul to the Lord, and to the *trusting* in him of the preceding verses. The *yea*, which, from superficial observation, many have supposed

to be dragged in for the sake of the alphabetical arrangement, indicates that the sufferer makes mention of nothing *peculiar* for himself, but only of what is common to *all* who are in the same circumstances. It is only when this "yea" can be uttered that prayer has a solid foundation. The futures are not, according to many interpreters, to be considered as optatives, (this would give to the verse a very insipid character); they give utterance to a general truth. The בגד has its usual sense, *to act perfidiously*. The *perfidiousness* is such as is perpetrated not against God, but against our neighbour. Perfidiousness comprehended every violation of duty towards one's neighbour. For there existed a brotherly relationship among all the members of the church of God, all were descended from the same bodily and spiritual race, all were interested in the covenant, and upon all was enjoined not only the love of God, but also the love of each other. And perfidiousness was the want of this due and commanded love. Perfidiousness, moreover, might be seen in the violation of some *particular* relationship arising out of what was general in its origin. Compare Ps. xli. 9. The highest degree of wickedness is here spoken of, where fidelity is violated *without a cause*,—ריקם, without any provocation on the other side,—where perfidiousness is practised against the faithful.—Many expositors have been led to adopt a false meaning, from the idea that, as there is no suitable contrast between those who wait on God and the perfidious, the perfidiousness must be that which has God for its object. But there is nothing in this: for hope in God is grounded on a good conscience,—the man who is not faithful to his neighbour cannot trust in the help of God,—as often as he attempts to do so, he meets with the terrible reply, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." We are prevented from considering God as the object of the perfidiousness, by the expression, "without cause," which is properly "empty," and secondarily, "without ground," as when we speak of "empty," that is, "groundless excuses," and stands in the same connection as it does in those clauses which speak of the unprovoked violation of duty towards a neighbour in Ps. vii. 4: compare the corresponding שׂנאי חנם in Ps. lxix. 4. In these passages, "without a cause," cannot refer to God—the expressions there explain themselves. ריקם signifies "thoughtless," "wicked," or, "in a vain worthless way," and may be taken as a verbal proof of the Davidic origin of our Psalm, as it occurs nowhere else in a

similar connection except in Ps. vii. 4. The expression, "mine enemies," in verse 2, is decisive as to the reference of the clause, who are "perfidious without a cause:" let me who trust in thee, not be ashamed, for *all* who wait on thee are kept from being put to shame; let mine enemies not triumph over me, for *all*, who, like mine enemies, are perfidious without a cause, are debarred from triumphing, and shall be put to shame: and it would be a turning of the tables if thou wert to permit them to triumph and me to be put to shame. Finally, the expression at the 19th verse, "they hate me with cruel hatred," is all the more deserving of being compared with the one before us, that it is impossible to fail to observe the correspondence between the beginning and the conclusion of the Psalm.

Ver. 4. *Make known to me thy ways, O Lord teach me thy paths.* Expositors generally understand by "the ways and paths of the Lord," "that manner of life which is well pleasing to him." The Psalmist on this supposition, prays for instruction and guidance that he may walk worthily in these ways. But it is much more correct to suppose that the Psalmist is here repeating in other words the prayer which he had already uttered in the preceding verse, and that the ways of God are the ways of salvation which he makes known to his own, that they may walk therein—a limitation required by the circumstances of the speaker: the Psalmist is not speaking *generally* of the ways of God, but only of those that are suitable to godly sufferers, and these, according to his being and word, can be none other than the ways of salvation. That this interpretation is the correct one, is clear from the connection, which would be broken in an unpleasant manner by the prayer for moral guidance—also from the circumstance, that in the xxxiv. Psalm, which is nearly related to the one before us, the prayer is only for the protection of God in trouble. It is still further clear from the *for* in the 5th verse, "teach me thy way, and lead me in it, *for* thou art the God of my salvation." It is impossible to do justice to this *for* in any other way than by supposing that the making known of the ways and the guidance in them, indicate nothing else than salvation and deliverance. How strong this proof is, is evident from the remark of De Wette: "that the second clause of this verse is not strictly connected (according to his exposition) with what goes before, (and yet the כִּי shows that such a connection must necessarily exist), and that we must give to 'my God of

salvation' too exact an interpretation!" Further, the tenth verse is in favour of this exposition, where, as is undeniable and generally allowed, "the ways" are "those in which he leads his own." Compare "all his ways are truth" in Deut. xxxii. 4. In like manner also ver. 9.

Ver. 5. *Lead me in thy truth and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation, I wait on thee continually.* Most expositors consider "in thy truth," as equivalent to "in true godliness, which is well pleasing to thee," or even (Hitzig) "in fidelity to thee." But this view is opposed, in the first place, by the כי, to which we have already adverted in exposing the false interpretation put upon the preceding verse. Secondly, אמת יהוה is always, "the truth and faithfulness which belongs to God," and never, "the truth which he desires, and which is well pleasing to him," or "faithfulness towards him." Compare Ps. xxx. 10; lxxi. 22; xci. 4. Lastly, this exposition is opposed by the 9th verse: "all the ways of the Lord are grace and *truth*." Here, as in the above-mentioned, and in all other passages, "the truth of God" is "his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises." In so far as this should be exhibited in the experience of the Psalmist, he represents it as the way in which he prays that God would lead him, (the דרך generally with the ב of the way in which one is led), just as he says in ver. 9, "the meek God leads in righteousness, in the paths of the same." Compare also Ps. xxvi. 3. After the words "teach me," we must supply "thy truth, let me know it in my experience." It appears that the ו here stands in stead of a vau at the beginning of a verse, where it could not have been conveniently placed, and that the Psalmist, for the purpose of rendering this obvious, repeats a word which he had already used, and introduces it in an abrupt manner: the strange appearance of the למדני is certainly fitted to lead us to suppose that it has its place here from regard to the alphabetical arrangement. The reason assigned in the second clause of the verse, applies equally to the preceding verse, as to the first clause of this one. God must undertake for the Psalmist, because he is his Saviour, and the only ground of his hope.

Ver. 6. *Remember thy tender mercies, O Lord, and thy favours, for they are from eternity.* God cannot be unlike himself, he cannot renounce his character. Love and goodness have been his attributes from eternity, he has always had compassion

on his own people, as a father has on his children, and therefore he cannot do otherwise than make the Psalmist, who is one of his children, partaker of his love and pity.

Ver. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, and my transgressions, according to thy grace remember me for thy goodness sake, O Lord.* Calvin explains as follows, the connection with the preceding verse: "Because our sins raise up a partition wall between us and God, and prevent him from hearing our wishes, and from stretching out his hand to help us, David now takes this obstacle out of the way. He acknowledges that he cannot otherwise, than by having his sins forgiven, be made partaker of the grace of God." But the forgiveness of sin is rather that in which God first *makes known* that grace and pity, for the manifestation of which the Psalmist had prayed in the preceding verse. If he has really become partaker of *this*, salvation and deliverance will follow as a matter of course. God remembers his tender mercies, for he cannot do otherwise, since they have dwelt with him from eternity, and therefore he cannot remember the sins of the Psalmist's youth, for to remember them would be to give scope to his *strict justice*, and not to his *tender mercy*. The Psalmist makes mention of his sins of youth, not as if he were now an immaculate saint, but because in youth the power of original corruption is particularly strong: *my sins, in which my youth particularly was so rich.* Luther: "For youth is not fit for virtue, or for anything that is good, because the blood is still too young and fresh, it cannot govern itself, or think of anything that is useful or good. For if any one will allow a youth to grow up, and do as he likes, he will become a roaring devil before one is aware what he is doing, as has been already experienced." Compare Job xiii. 26; 2 Tim. ii. 22. That the temptations to sin are strong in youth, is obvious, not only in the case of individuals, but also in that of nations. Moses reminds the Israelites, (Deut. ix. 7), that they had provoked the Lord from the day that he had led them out of Egypt, and then represents to them, in detail, the sins of their youth. It is all the more important to make this remark, that the Psalm, according to its conclusion, is intended not only for individual members, but also for the whole body of the church. The "transgressions" is a stronger word than "sins;" the gradation implies that the Psalmist acknowledged the whole magnitude, and all the aggravations of his transgressions. In the words,

"think on me according to thy grace," the Psalmist prays not that God would act towards him in an arbitrary manner, but, like every pious suppliant, that he would act according to the necessity of his own being. The strict and inexorable righteousness of God comes into operation in regard to those only who are without the covenant and the promises. God must think upon his own children, according to his grace. "For thy goodness' sake," points to this necessity in the being of God. This is the ground in God from which the fulfilment of the prayer proceeds: because thou art good, and therefore canst not be severe towards the weakness of thy people, and destitute of care towards them. If God were not good, it would be in vain to offer up to him such a prayer as this.

Ver. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore does he teach sinners the way.* The Psalmist, in the passage from ver. 8—10, in following up "for thy goodness' sake," enters upon the consideration of the Divine perfections, for the purpose of obtaining thereby renewed confidence in God's compassion, and new zeal in prayer. The principles on which the early petitions depend, are here developed. Vitringa, at the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 4, has some very important observations upon ישר, *upright*, in so far as it is used in reference to God. It denotes agreement between the Divine being and actions on the one hand, and the idea of what is good or Divine on the other, perinde ac architectis rectum dicitur quod exactum est ad libram aut calamum. Vitringa observes, that in this ישר there was made known the true idea of God, which the popular and mythic theology of the Gentiles had corrupted, and remarks, "that in speaking of the operations of Divine providence, we ought to take great care lest we entertain of God the blasphemous and absurd idea that he can do anything which is inconsistent with right reason, equity, and purity." God because not good, would not even be upright, were he to fail to assist his own people in spite of their sins of infirmity. The clause, *he teaches the way*, properly *he instructs in the way*, (which explains the construction with ב, which occurs instead of the usual construction with the accusative also in Ps. xxxii. 8), is equivalent to, *he is their leader in the path of life, their helper, their protection.* We cannot, as most interpreters do, consider the words as having any reference whatever to *moral instruction.* This idea is opposed by the relation in which they stand to what goes before, and to

what follows. The Psalmist merely expresses in this verse in the form of a general affirmation, that the regular course of God's procedure was to grant what he had there besought from God for himself, and which he will still beseech from him. The verse before us stands in the same relation to the passage ver. 4—7, as ver. 3 does to ver. 1 and 2. But in ver. 4—7, the language is not concerning moral instruction, but concerning forgiveness of sin and salvation. God helps *sinners;* that is, he helps his people though they are sinners: the expression is not *the sinners:* there is also an important difference between חטאים and פשעים or רשעים: the import of the whole is this, "there is a necessary out-going of the goodness and righteousness of God towards his own people *in spite* of their sins; and this tends to the praise of these attributes."

Ver. 9. *He guides the meek in righteousness, and teaches the meek his way.* Calvin misinterprets this clause: "He speaks here of the second grace which the Lord imparts to his believing people, after that they have become the willing subjects of his kingdom." According to the correct exposition, the Psalmist speaks here of the same grace of which he had spoken in the preceding verses. There, as here, the subject is the imparting of help and salvation. The *meek* here, are the sinners of the preceding verse, from which again it is evident what sort of sinners it is that we are to think about, those, namely, who are at the same time meek. He leads them *in righteousness,* that is, he gives to them, who do not oppose might with might, justice against their oppressors. The righteousness appears here like a road along which God leads his people, like the *truth* of the 4th verse. The fut. conv. ידרך stands in the sense of what is usual. The whole verse expresses the truth on the foundation of which *the prayer* of the 4th verse rises, and it is evident that it refers to *what takes place,* so that it is altogether inadmissible to think of moral instruction and guidance there.

Ver. 10. *All the ways of the Lord are grace and truth to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.* Calvin: "The sum is, God acts in such a manner towards his faithful people as that they experience him, at all points, to be gracious and true." The holding of the covenant and the testimonies stands, according to the 8th verse, in opposition to bold and wilful transgressions. *Sins of infirmity* cannot deprive a man of interest in the promises of the covenant. The covenant itself provides for them

the means of expiation and forgiveness, when they are confessed and repented of.

Ver. 11. *For thy name's sake, O Lord, thus wilt thou forgive mine iniquity for it is great.* The ו in וסלחתי is what is termed the vau conversivum of the future, or, according to Ewald, p. 551, Sm. Gr. 613, the vau relative of the first mode. "On account of thy name" is "on account of thy being." The name of Jehova,—made up of his manifestations,—brings before the mind for contemplation all that Jehova is, presents his whole historical character. It is the *goodness* and *righteousness* of God, according to ver. 8, that comes here particularly into notice, according to which, he cannot do otherwise than open up to his own people the fountain of forgiveness. Luther: "We have a throne of grace for sin, so that our Lord God must straightway shut his eyes and say, as in Ps. xxxii. 1, Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin. This is our theology, as in the petition of the Lord's prayer, forgive us our sins; from this we know that we live only under grace. Grace, however, does not only take away sin, it also bears with it and endures it; this is the import of the throne of grace." De Wette is mistaken: "an opposition—not for my sake, not on account of any merit of mine." The Psalmist cannot be excluding his own merit as the ground of forgiveness of sin, for he is not thinking about it. The opposition is rather this: because thou art good and upright, do not take vengeance on mine iniquity with inexorable severity, but *forgive it.* The words, "for it is great," form the ground of the Psalmist's prayer for forgiveness. His iniquity is so great that he must be irremediably lost if God were to deal with him according to his works.

Ver. 12. *Who is the man who fears the Lord? He teaches him the way which he may choose.* The "who is the man," expresses the sense that wherever there is such a one, he shall not fail of the gracious guidance of God, and that the fear of the Lord and salvation are inseparably, and without exception, bound together. *The way* here also, as what follows sufficiently shows, is not to be understood in a moral sense. The fearers of God have in their journey through life a faithful leader and guide: the Lord points out to them the way of salvation. The ungodly, on the other hand, left to themselves, choose the way of destruction; they run upon their own ruin.

Ver. 13. *His soul spends the night in good, and his seed pos-*

sesses the land. The soul of the God-fearing man, is his own person in opposition to his posterity. *To spend the night in good* is *to enjoy lasting blessings.* The second clause alludes to those passages in the law in which the Lord promises to his people lasting possession of Canaan, provided they continue in the fear of God: compare, for example, Ex. xx. 12; Lev. xxvi.; Deut. xxviii. While the ungodly, with their race, are rooted out from among their people, the promises are fulfilled to the godly, and to their posterity who resemble them. The אֶרֶץ, with the poetical omission of the article, stands for the land of Canaan. As the land is here used only as an example individualizing the Divine blessings attendant on faithfulness to the covenant, it is easy to separate, without any fear of misunderstanding, the general substance of the thought,—the enjoyment of Divine blessings, of salvation,—from its special Old Testament dress. Our Lord quotes the passage in this way in Matt. v. 5.

Ver. 14. *The friendship of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.* At the first clause compare Prov. iii. 32: "The ungodly is abomination to the Lord, but his intimate friendship is with the righteous:" סוֹדוֹ Job xxix. 4. The second clause, literally, "his covenant is to make known to them," is "to be made known to them." Compare on the infinitive with לְ Ewald, p. 621, Sm. Gr. 544. Or it may be thus expounded: "his covenant is for the fearers of God, that he may make it known to them." The making known of the covenant is not an *inward character*, it takes place *in matters of fact*, through the events of their history, in which their relation to the covenant is developed. Several expositors, in opposition to the parallelism, the connection, and the usage of the terms, suppose the Psalmist to be speaking of insight into the meaning of the law.

Ver. 15. *Mine eyes look always towards the Lord, for he takes my feet out of the net.* Compare Ps. ix. 15.

Ver. 16. *Turn thyself to me, and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and miserable.*

Ver. 17. *The troubles of my heart they enlarge, bring me out of my distresses.* The צָרוֹת is properly "narrowness." We cannot take הִרְחִיבוּ in an intransitive sense. The many who oppress the Psalmist, stand over against the one from whom he can hope for deliverance. In reality, the enemies and haters of the 19th verse are the subject, but they are not named express-

ly as such, for the purpose of increasing the impression. All were sworn against the Psalmist: compare the יחיד of the preceding verse, from which the subject is to be taken. Several interpreters, and lastly, Hitzig, would alter the text. They take the ו from the end of והרחבו, and join it to the next word, and point וְהַרְחֵב: *make wide the straitness of my heart.* But one does not see how the more easy could ever be supplanted by the more difficult reading. There is in the mere description of the greatness of the trouble in the first clause, a stronger cry to God for help, than if the cry had been at the same time expressed. The first clause of this verse corresponds exactly to the second of the preceding, and the second to the first. On an attentive consideration, it is obvious that this arbitrary alteration will not give a suitable sense, as the straitness does not admit of being enlarged.

Ver. 18. *See my misery and suffering, and forgive all my sin.* The ל is not the mark of the accusative, but is properly to be translated *forgive, grant forgiveness to all my sins.*

Ver. 19. *See my enemies for they are many, and they hate me with unrighteous hatred.* God sees first, and therefore he cannot but help: but that he should see and not further overlook, is rendered necessary from their great numbers and malicious wickedness.

Ver. 20. *Keep my soul and deliver me, let me not be ashamed for I trust in thee.* Muis: "An important ground:—otherwise I would have trusted in thee in vain. The glory of God demands that he help."

Ver. 21. *Blamelessness and uprightness shall preserve me, for I hope in thee,* who helpest the upright. Otherwise the expectation that salvation shall follow uprightness would be a foolish one. Luther: "simple and right, *i. e.* because I am upright and without blame in my life."

Ver. 22. *Redeem, O God, Israel out of all his troubles.* This verse, which Rosenmüller supposes to have been added at a later period, is obviously intended to be a closing verse, from the circumstance of its containing only one clause. In this respect it resembles the first verse, which, in like manner, stands out of the alphabetical arrangement, as the second verse also begins with א. The first verse begins with א, that the Psalm might have, as it were, the signature of an alphabetical one on its forehead, and inasmuch as the א gets thus only a part of its rights,

it has assigned to it the first word of the second verse. The transition from the prayer, in regard to the necessities of the individual, to one on behalf of the whole church, is all the more easy, that the Psalm throughout has no special application. There is a similar conclusion in Ps. xxxiv. 23.—Elohim, the general name of God, is used here, although Jehovah had been used throughout the Psalm, because Israel is destitute of *all human help*. The opposition which this called forth is expressly announced in the preceding context.

PSALM XXVI.

The Psalmist begins at ver. 1, with the prayer to God for help in trouble, which he grounds on his active moral aims, his unfeigned piety, and especially *his trust* in God. He then turns first, in ver. 2—8, to expand this basis of his prayer: his heart is pure, and need not fear the strictest scrutiny, for (as the expansion of, *I have trusted in the Lord)* he has had the love of God and the faithfulness of God always before his eyes and in his heart, and in regard to them, *(I have walked in mine integrity)*, he has shunned every intercourse with the wicked in their wickedness: he has acted blamelessly towards his neighbour, and towards God his heart has been filled with fear and love After this, the development of the prayer concludes the Psalm: that God would not, as regards community of *outward events*, join him with those from whom he has been *inwardly* separated: that he would not give him over with the wicked to *death*. He obtains, in ver. 12, *the confidence* of being heard in this prayer, so that, at the conclusion, he is able to give utterance to a purpose expressive of the most assured confidence of salvation—*to thank God*.

We have thus an introductory and a concluding verse, and two main divisions. All the remarkable numbers of the Old Testament are here brought into use. The whole Psalm has twelve verses, the main body is complete in ten, the first division of this main body, containing the description of the fulfilment of the duties of the covenant, (compare Ps. xxv. 10, *such as keep his covenant,*) in seven—the number of the covenant—and the second division, containing the prayer for the blessing of the covenant, in three—the number of the Mosaic blessing.

The situation of the Psalmist, and the import of the Psalm, have been completely misunderstood by the recent expositors. Thus De Wette remarks: "the prayer in ver. 9 has no special reference, but merely means, that when God sits in judgment and inflicts punishments, that he will exempt the Psalmist from these;" and Ewald concludes from the same verse, "that the Psalm was composed on the occasion of a pestilence." The situation is not that of one who *fears* misery, it is that of one who *finds* himself already in misery; the prayer is not one for protection before misery, but for deliverance out of misery, and for defence against utter destruction, against those *annihilating* punishments which belong only to the *wicked*, while of the *righteous* it is said, "God afflicteth me sore, but he does not give me over to destruction." There is not a word throughout the whole Psalm of general judgment or pestilences. That this is the correct view, is evident from the first word *judge me*, that is, "interpose to give me justice, deliver me from a condition in which, if it were to be regarded as permanent, it would be unrighteous to suffer me to remain." The prayer for the *judgment* of God always proceeds from such as are already in misery. It is still further evident from the 11th verse, *deliver me*, or *redeem me*, after which De Wette inaccurately supplies the words, *from threatened judgment*, and also from the clause, *have mercy on me*. The same use may be made of the first clause of the concluding verse, *my foot standeth in an even place*, which implies that *hitherto* the Psalmist had been standing on difficult and dangerous ground.

All attempts to find out an individual application for our Psalm, or to mark out any historical circumstances, with which it may be connected, have utterly failed. Thus Ewald, from the strong language used in drawing the contrast between the wicked and the righteous, is of opinion that it was composed at a late period, and from ver. 6—8, that it was composed in the temple. The circumstance, that it has been found impossible to define the *trouble*, and that the language used is manifestly and designedly as general as it could possibly be, is sufficient to show that the Psalmist speaks in the name, and out of the soul of the righteous man. If this be established, it is also clear that the Psalm is of a hortatory character. The theme is this: "Only he who can with truth say, *I have walked in mine integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord*, may depend upon Divine

aid in trouble, but *he* may do so with full confidence." The general tendency is also clear from the connection with Psalm XXV.

In pointing out the general character of our Psalm, we also remove an objection which Köster has drawn from the graphic descriptions, and from the uniform division of the verses into two parts, against its Davidic origin. Its origin is fully confirmed, not only by the superscription, but also by its manifest relationship to Ps. xvii., xviii. 21, xv. and xxiv.

The manifest resemblance between the clause, *judge me, O God, for I have walked in mine* INTEGRITY, at the beginning of our Psalm, and the one, INTEGRITY *and uprightness shall preserve me,* near the close of Ps. XXV., is sufficient to lead to the idea, that the two Psalms are very nearly related to each other. This idea is confirmed by the similarity between them as to formal arrangement; in Ps. XXV. we have, 1. 20. 1.,—an introductory verse, two decades, and a concluding verse,—and in the Psalm before us, 1. 10. 1. Perhaps also in the 25th Psalm, the effort not to go beyond the number 20, may have been the cause why the ר and the ק were omitted. Along with this *outward* similarity, there is an *inward* resemblance of the closest kind. The contents of the one Psalm supplement those of the other. In the one Psalm, the suffering righteous man is directed to seek refuge in the Divine *compassion,* which secures forgiveness for manifold sins of infirmity: in the other, again, he is led, from a consideration of the Divine righteousness, which must make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, to entertain the firm hope of deliverance. We have, therefore, before us a pair of Psalms, which point to the compassion and the righteousness of God, as the two foundations on which the Lord's people may rest a confident hope of deliverance. The two are connected, as it were, by a *bridge;* the idea which occupied a subordinate position near the conclusion of the one Psalm, being brought prominently forward, and having the first place assigned to it in the other.

Ver. 1. *Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity; and I have trusted in the Lord, therefore may I not slide.* The two members of this verse are parallel to each other. *I walk in mine integrity,* corresponds to, *I trust in the Lord:* and *judge me,* to *may I not slide.* In each member there is contained the description of a subjective condition, and a prayer grounded

on that condition. This manifest parallelism would be destroyed, were we, with most recent expositors, to translate: "and I trust in the Lord without sliding." Against this interpretation, moreover, we may urge: 1st, That to slide occurs frequently in the sense of *to fall to the ground*, Job xii. 3; Ps. xviii. 37; xxxvii. 31, while there is no such expression any where else, as *to slide in trusting in God*. 2d, *I have trusted in the Lord*, is not at all a suitable expression in *an address* to God. 3d, *My foot standeth in an even place*, at the close of the Psalm, announces that the prayer, *may I not slide*, has been heard, just as, *I shall praise the Lord*, implies that an answer has been received to *judge me, O God.—Judge me* is in the mouth of a righteous man equivalent to *help me*. For if God takes up the cause of such a one, he must decide it in his favour. Only he can say, *help me*, in confidence of being heard, who can with a good conscience also change *help me* into *judge me*. That the תם is more than openness or sincerity, that it denotes moral blamelessness, and purity in all its extent, is evident from its development (4—6), and from its opposite in verse 10: compare also the similar Psalm ci. This is also the *fundamental meaning*. In 1 Kings xxii. 34, the word is used in an improper or popular sense. To *walk* is to *act*. The blamelessness of the Psalmist, is that in which his conduct rests, the guiding principle of his life. The blamelessness of the Psalmist is the property, the character, the walk, the experience marked by it. Hence it appears that the suffix in *mine* integrity is by no means superfluous, as it must be considered as equivalent to, *in the integrity to which I have been accustomed.—To walk in integrity* has reference to the commandments of the *second* table, and *to trust in the Lord* to those of the *first*. *To walk in integrity* is co-ordinate with *to trust in the Lord*, only in the sense in which love to our neighbour is co-ordinate with love to God, in Matth. xxii. 39. Trust in God is the *fountain* of integrity. Whoever places his hope in God need not seek to advance his worldly interests by violating his duty towards his neighbour: he waits for every thing *from above*, and is, at the same time, always determined that he will not be deprived of the favour of his heavenly Father through violating his commandments.

There follows now, in verses 2—8, the development of *I have walked in integrity, and trusted in the Lord*. The Psalmist first *affirms* the cleanness and the purity of his heart, verse 2; then

he *grounds* this affirmation upon verses 3—8, in which he first descends from piety to morality, verse 3—5, and then comes back again to piety as at verse 1. The first division of the Psalm, which is complete in *seven* verses, is thus characterised by a *threefold* division within itself, an introduction, and two strophes, each of the latter consisting of three verses. The thrice-repeated name of Jehovah is in unison with this.

Ver. 2. *Prove me, O Lord, and try me, for my heart and my reins have been purified.* The Psalmist had, in the preceding verse, grounded his prayer for help on his trust in God, and on his integrity. But these could form a good basis for prayer, only if they were true, unfeigned, *heartfelt;* for as every thing depends on the heart, it is at it that the law points expressively. In order, then, to represent them as such, the Psalmist exhorts God to prove his innermost heart, and affirms that this proof will be most satisfactory in its results. Ps. xvii. 3 is exactly parallel. The reading in the text is צְרוּפָה, the part. paul., *my reins and my heart have been purified.* The union of the feminine singular with the plural is quite common: compare Mich. i. 9, Ew. Sm. Gr. p. 568. The connection with the first clause may either be thus explained: the Psalmist confidently exhorts God to make trial:—for his heart has been purified, so that the trial cannot but be satisfactory to him,—when thou makest the trial, thou shalt find, &c. Or we may consider the two clauses as simply co-ordinate, and the first, in this sense, *I need not fear the strictest scrutiny.* The reading on the margin, צָרְפָה, the imperative, is a mere conjecture, and is indebted for its existence only to the effort to effect a conformity between the two clauses. The textual reading is favoured by the *for* at the beginning of the following verse, which, with the marginal reading, could not be so easily explained.

Ver. 3. *For thy loving-kindness was before my eyes, and I walked in thy truth.* The *then* refers, not only to our verse, but to the whole section, verses 3—8, the object of which is to establish the assertion of the Psalmist that he did not fear the strictest scrutiny, because (or, and that) his heart has been purified. For to a purified heart there belongs first *sincere piety;* this the Psalmist claims for himself, here and towards the end of this section, in the second half of verse 6, and in verses 7 and 8. The second part of purity of heart is *true righteousness;* this comes into notice in verses 4, 5, and the first half of verse 6.

The copiousness in regard to piety in the second strophe, corresponds to the brevity on the same subject in the first. The Psalmist designedly begins and ends with piety: the righteousness, which is in this way enclosed within it, proceeds from it, and is its outward manifestation. The import of *I have walked in thy truth*, is obvious from the parallel, *thy love was before my eyes, i. e. I have always kept my eyes fixed upon thy love.* Hence the truth of God,—his faithfulness to his promises,—is the domain within which the Psalmist spiritually moves,—the territory on which he walks:—*I have continually thought upon the truth.* The inward connection between morality and piety is here laid open. Whoever has the love of God before his eyes, and his truth in his heart, or, in one word, whoever *trusts* in God, (for our verse is only the development of *I have trusted in the Lord*, ver. 1,) will not sit with men of falsehood, &c. Wherever the consciousness of the grace and faithfulness of God rules the life, the man will quietly expect from on high that which one living without God in the world, and acting under the impulse of his own strong natural desire for enjoyment, will endeavour to take at his own hand, and through the violation of the holy commandments of God.—Expositions such as those of Hitzig, *for love of thee was before mine eyes, and I have walked in faithfulness to thee*, disappear of themselves, as soon as we get a real insight into the strophe arrangement of the Psalm. Besides אמת is not faithfulness, חסד יהוה is always the love of God, never love to God, (compare Psalm v. 8,) and אמת יהוה is always the truth of God, compare Psalm xxv. 5. It will not do, with Maurer and others, to understand by *the truth of God, his commandments*, because חסד and אמת always refer, when used in this connection, to the love of God, and to his faithfulness in keeping his promises. Lastly, we cannot translate with Muis: "I have thy love and truth always before me as *an example.*" For the love and the faithfulness of God are never brought before us as a pattern or example, but always only as a ground of confidence.

Ver. 4. *I sat not with men of falsehood, and with dissemblers I do not come.* The change of tense is to be carefully observed. The preterite indicates what the Psalmist had hitherto done, the future, what he would take care to do. It is not without design that the Psalmist begins with *falsehood.* The conviction of the *truth* of God removes from him all temptation to be *untrue.*

This reference to the preceding verse clearly requires us to understand the שוא in its usual sense of "lying," "falsehood." We cannot, therefore, with Hitzig, translate it by *crime*, nor with others, by *vanity, worthlessness:* the parallel term is also against all such renderings, נעלמים dissemblers, qui frontem aperiunt, mentem tegunt. After *I do not come*, we are to understand, *to their meeting* or *assembly*, which is very easily supplied out of the first clause. Compare Genesis xlix. 6.—Ver. 5. *I hated the assembly of the evil doers, and with the wicked I do not sit.* The import is: "I take no part in the assemblies for the ruin of others." In ver. 4 also, the "*sitting*," and the "*coming*," do not refer to intercourse and conversation *generally*, but to some one common subject.

Ver. 6. *I wash mine hands in innocency, and I shall compass thine altar, O Lord.* The threefold Jehova of the section is so divided, that it opens it, and concludes it, and stands here in the first verse of the second strophe,—the strophe of the ascent from morality to piety. *The hands* come in, in the first clause, as the instruments of action: the *innocence* is the spiritual water, compare Psalm lxxii. 13, where *the washing of the hands in innocency*, corresponds to *cleansing the heart*, Job ix. 30, where, instead of *innocency*, there stands *snow-water*, and Deut. xxi. 6, and Matt. xxvii. 34, where the hands were washed in protestation of innocence. The Psalmist describes himself as one integer vitæ scelerisque purus.—The second clause is translated by Gesenius and others: "I go round about thy altar." But סובב never occurs in the sense of "to go round any thing." And besides, we know nothing about *going round the altar*. Luther seized the true sense: "I hold fast by thine altar, O Lord." To *encompass*, is used of a single individual, in the sense of connection with, or strong attachment to: compare Jer. xxxi. 22: see on the passage the Christology P. III. p. 567. The altar of the Lord, which the Psalmist approaches, is placed in opposition to the assembly of the wicked, which he shuns. The fut. parag. may very suitably be taken in its usual sense: "I will encompass." As the Psalmist had done it hitherto, so is he determined to continue to do it in future. The changes of the preterite, of the common future, and of the paragogic future, are assuredly not accidental, and must not be overlooked.—De Wette does not seem to have had a correct view of the contents of this verse: "next to pure morality, the poet is a zealous ob-

server of religious rites." To this it may be replied, it is not the outward worship of God, as such, that is referred to in the clause, *I have trusted in God*, of which the passage before us is merely the development. The verse, moreover, is connected with the one following, and from that verse it is obvious that the object which the Psalmist has in view in coming to God's altar, the thing which brings him there, is not that he may offer outward sacrifices, (this is thought of assuredly not as a matter of inferior moment,) as if they were meritorious in themselves, but that he may bless and praise God, and may express his *trust* in him, in the place consecrated to his service, and in the presence of his church. Thus the expression, *I encompass thine altar*, is very suitable after *my heart has been purified*, and stands related, as is obviously designed by the Psalmist, as cause to effect, to *I wash my hands in innocency*.

Ver. 7. *That I may cause the voice of praise to be heard, and may make known all thy wonders.* There is no reason for translating לשמיע, contracted for להשמיע, contrary to the usual import of the infinitive with ל, by *while I sound*. Though the construction of השמיע, followed by ב, cannot without difficulty admit of the sense of *sounding*, there is no objection here, as in Exodus xxvii. 30, to take the sense of *to cause to be heard, to cause that others hear*, with ב as the instr. ב. The wonders of the Lord, the manifestations of his glory in guiding Israel, and especially the Psalmist, form the subject of the praise. Only he whose heart is so full of these wonders, that his mouth cannot refrain from uttering them, can offer up, in a manner worthy of being heard, the prayer, *judge me, O Lord*, and shall be made to share in *new wonders*. For wonders are allotted only to *trust*, and trust calls forth praise and thanks.

Ver. 8. *O Lord, I loved the place of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* The Psalmist proceeds to show that he has approved himself, through fulfilling the commandments of the first table, as one whom God ought to help. The sum of the first table is love to God, and under the law this love was not directed to a distant and abstract God, but to one made known to his people, and dwelling in the midst of them: just as, under the gospel, a Christian can love God only in Christ, so under the Old Testament, love to God was at the same time love to the place of his house. The honour of God is his glory, which is wherever he is, for he is the glorious God:—*where thou dwell-*

est, the glorious God, compare Ex. xl. 34, 35; Num. ix. 15, 16.—De Wette maintains, that the circumstance of so much importance being attached to *repairing* to the sanctuary, betrays the late period of the writer. But there is assuredly nothing said of *repairing* to the sanctuary, and the idea, that as there is but one Lord, so there is but one *sanctuary,* is exceedingly suitable to the time of David. It is shown in the Beitr., P. 3, p. 54, &c., that even during the period of the judges, the ark of the covenant, which had its place at Shiloh, was considered, as it ought to have been under the law, as the heart, the spiritual centre-point of the nation, and the Lord and the ark were viewed as inseparably connected together. As a proof that the ark of the covenant, which was brought by David to Mount Zion (compare for example Ps. xv. 1) occupied this position, it is sufficient to refer to 2 Sam. xv. 25: "and the king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark of the covenant into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation." The ark and the Lord appear here as inseparably connected: to see the dwelling-place of the Lord is, at the same time, to see himself. In full accordance with this, are those Psalms manifestly of Davidic origin, in which the expression of hope of *help* from Mount Zion so frequently occurs: compare, for example: Psalm xiv. 7; xx. 3.

The development of *I have walked in mine integrity, and trusted in the Lord,* is followed by the development of *judge me, and may I not slide.*

Ver. 9. *Take not away my soul with the wicked, and my life with men of blood.* The עִם here stands in significant reference to the עִם of ver. 4, 5. The Psalmist prays that God would not, in contradiction to his own being, and his word grounded on it, bind him up in community of *outward condition* with those with whom he had always avoided having any communion in *thought* and *action,* that he would not visit one, who was already in a suffering condition, with that irremediable *ruin* which is the portion of the wicked—the penalty of *daring sin,* not the fatherly chastisement of *infirmity:* compare Ps. lxxxvi. 1, 2, "bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me, for I am poor and needy, preserve my soul, for I am holy, O thou my God, save thy servant who trusteth in thee." Calvin: "It cannot but appear, at first sight, an absurd prayer, that God would not involve the righteous in destruction with the ungodly, but God, in the exercise of

his fatherly indulgence, permits his people to give such free expression to their feelings, that they may, even by the exercise of prayer itself, alleviate their care. For David, while he gives utterance to this wish, sets the righteous judgment of God before his eyes for the purpose of delivering himself from care and fear, inasmuch as nothing can be more strange to God than to blend together good and evil." There is an allusion to Gen. xviii. 23, &c.

Ver. 10. *In whose hand is crime, and whose right hand is full of bribery.* Compare for the first clause, Ps. vii. 3; and for the second, Ps. xv. 5.

Ver. 11. *But I walk in mine integrity, redeem me, and be merciful unto me.* The reason why the Psalmist, in this second part, makes mention only of duties of the second table, is because these are more tangible, deception as to what is right and wrong is not easy here, and the opposites are clear, and cannot be mistaken for each other.

Ver. 12. *My foot stands in an even place, in the assemblies will I praise the Lord.* The עמדה is the prophet. future. The Psalmist in faith sees his deliverance as already present. It is clear as day that the first clause refers to this, and not to righteousness. This is required by the connection, by the parallelism, by the relation in which the words stand to *may I not slide*, ver. 1, (whose *fulfilment* they announce), by the ordinary use of the term, Ps. xxvii. 11, cxliii. 10, and by the analogy of the preterites in the conclusions of the Psalms which are generally prophetic. The *even place* stands in opposition to a *difficult territory*, full of *steep cliffs* and *precipices*.—The second clause expresses in like manner, the confident expectation of being heard and delivered:—the Lord will give me *opportunity* to praise him. The assemblies are not private meetings of the faithful for edification, but assemblies for the public worship of God: compare ver. 6 and 7, and Ps. xxii. 26. *I shall praise the Lord*, makes known the fulfilment of *judge me, O Lord.* The "Jehova" completes the threefold repetition of the word in the conclusion and introduction, which, in this respect, correspond to the main body of the Psalm.

At the conclusion of the exposition it is necessary to advert to the charge of *self-righteousness*. The older expositors had already adverted to this point. Amyraldus remarks: "David speaks in such high expressions of his innocence and piety,

that the Psalm can be fully interpreted only by considering David as a type of Christ, and by taking it for granted that he had not so much himself as Christ before his mind when he composed it." And De Wette has openly taken notice of the subject in the way of an objection to this Psalm. The poet, he supposes, speaks with so much self-complacency and confidence, as to let it be seen that he fully considers himself as entitled to a better lot than what is assigned to other men. We, whose minds have been enlightened by the teaching of the New Testament on the subject of the righteousness of faith without works, are very strikingly reminded, by such language, of the prayer of the Pharisee. The ground of this error lies in the prominence given to legal observances among the Hebrews: to these there was much more attention paid than to the requirements of pure morality. But that this whole charge is founded upon a complete mistake, is evident from what has been said at Ps. xvii. 1, xviii. 20, and, in the introduction to the Psalm before us, on its didactic tendency, and its connection with Psalm xxv., which, according to De Wette, is distinguished from the most beautiful humility and acknowledgments of unworthiness. To all this the following observations may still be added.—That the Psalmist is very far from representing himself as a spotless saint, and that the righteousness and piety of which he speaks, is as yet *to be formed*, and consists in nothing more than in *fundamental rectitude* of soul, and includes manifold sins of infirmity, is evident, irrespective of the connection of our Psalm with the preceding one, (a connection, however, which it is impossible to disregard), from the circumstance, that the Psalmist acknowledges, as right in itself, the suffering to which he is exposed: it is *destruction* only, not *chastisement*, that he deprecates,—this he knows to be perfectly right in itself, and to have been fully merited by him. Righteousness in this sense is, even in the New Testament, spoken of as the indispensable prerequisite of salvation. It is thus that we read, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," that is, they shall experience him to be gracious. Our Psalm is a commentary on this statement, and indeed, generally on the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. Of this righteousness we are by no means compelled to say that it must, by all means, be in existence, yet it must not, on any account, be the object of consciousness: false humility is really a lie, and cannot be acceptable to a God of

truth. Such a consciousness is not incompatible with the doctrine of the righteousness of faith, except when that doctrine is misemployed as subservient to the purposes of rationalism; *shall* and *am* are separated by an immense gulf: the righteousness of faith, in the scriptural sense, is the parent, not the enemy of integrity of life. Assuredly the Christian poet sings, that he who has washed away his sins in the blood of Christ, cannot but maintain a holy walk.—The prayer of the Pharisee has nothing to do with our Psalm: the righteousness there is *imaginary*, here it is *real*, there it consists in the *careful observance of rites and ceremonies*, here it is *inward piety and outward morality*, there it is *absolute*, here it is *limited*.—Finally, though there were here the expression of inordinate self-complacency, it could not well be traced to the prevalence among the Hebrews of superior regard to the ceremonial over the moral law. For how can the Psalmist be conceived to refer to ceremonial observances, when his whole language has reference to his trust in God, to his love to God, and to the blamelessness of his walk, as the outward expression of the purity of his heart?

Instead of bringing forward such an unwarrantable charge, it would have been much more becoming to have expressed admiration at the high purity of the moral and religious feelings which pervade this Psalm, at its entire freedom from every false peculiarity, at its living insight into "be ye holy, for I am holy," and at its decisive opposition to everything approaching to Pharisaism, whose fundamental error is the separation between religion and morality, accompanied with completely raw conceptions as to the former.

PSALM XXVII.

The Lord is the Psalmist's *light* and *salvation;* therefore he may not fear though in the midst of the greatest dangers. If he only remain an inmate in the house of God, in possession of the grace of God, he is hid; for God protects his own. Therefore though he is in the midst of the oppressions of enemies, he is sure of deliverance and victory, ver. 1—6. The Psalmist had, in the first part, risen to heaven on the wings of faith, and looked down from thence, *with contempt*, on the trouble and danger below upon the earth: now he descends again, with the power

which he had there acquired, to conflict actually with the troubles and oppressions of earth. The tone of triumph now disappears, bnt there still remains so much of joy, that the Psalmist, even in the midst of his melancholy and complaint, can pray, *in the second part*, with heartfelt confidence, ver. 7—12, that God would take pity upon his trouble, and would deliver him out of the hands of those who, through artifice and force, seek his *ruin*. After these two strophes,—the one that of confidence, the other that of prayer,—the one that of the descent from God to trouble, the other that of the ascent (thereby rendered possible), from trouble to God, there follows the *conclusion* in ver. 13 and 14, which brings together, within a short compass, the contents of the whole Psalm, and points out what is really its *scope:* if the Psalmist place not his trust in God, he must,—so great is his danger,—necessarily despair. Hence he exclaims to his soul, expressively and repeatedly, "wait on the Lord," which forms the essence of the whole Psalm.

It will not do to subdivide the two chief divisions of the Psalm, each into two strophes of three verses, though the 4th verse would seem, at first sight, to lead us to make such an attempt. For the 6th verse draws the conclusion which it contains, not only from the 4th and 5th verses, but also from the whole preceding paragraph: and in the second part there is no break in the sense at ver. 9.

The Psalmist has evidently paid particular attention to the numbering of the verses. The main body of the Psalm is complete in *twelve*,—the number of the people of the covenant. The whole Psalm contains twice *seven*,—the signature of the covenant. The word Jehovah is repeated six times in the first half, in manifest accordance with the six verses in each of the two chief divisions, and in reference to the twelve verses of the whole main body of the Psalm. In accordance with the doubled seven of the verses of the whole, the word Jehovah occurs seven times in the second half, the second strophe (7—12), and the conclusion together. If we count up the number of times the word Jehovah is repeated in the first strophe and the second together, we find it amounts to *ten*,—the signature of completeness. The names of God occur in the conclusion three times,—the signature of the blessing.—That the position of the name of Jehovah was designed, even as to most minute particulars, is evident also from the circumstance, that it *begins* and

concludes the Psalm, and that it also marks where the first strophe ends, and the second begins.

The situation referred to in the Psalm, is that of one who is completely surrounded by enemies, (ver. 6), who in every way seek his ruin (which is the most earnest wish of their hearts), (ver. 12), who is destitute of all human help, (ver. 10,) and who, unless God interpose, is utterly ruined, (ver. 13.)

The intimation given in the title, that David is the author of the Psalm, is confirmed by *internal* evidence. It is impossible to refer the Psalm to a later age than that of David, because at verse 5 the author speaks of God hiding him in his *pavilion*, and in his *tabernacle*, and in the 6th verse, of offering unto God sacrifice in his *tabernacle*. While it is evident that the היכל, from the use of which in the 4th verse, an attempt has been made against the Davidic authorship of the Psalm, was applied to the holy tabernacle, as is proved by what has been said on the 5th Psalm, there cannot even be the shadow of a proof adduced to show, that, under Solomon, the temple was still called a *tabernacle* or *pavilion*. And in proof that David was the author of the Psalm, it may be said, not only in general, that among the manifold kinds of troubles, there is here, in remarkable correspondence with his experience, peculiar prominence given to distress, arising from *the oppression of enemies*, but also in particular, that the Psalmist speaks like a *warrior* borne down by *hostile armies*, and that the idea uppermost in his mind is that of a *battle* that has been waged, and of a *camp* that has been pitched against him.

All attempts to find out any particular event in the life of David, to which the Psalm may more especially be referred, have failed. And from the failure of these, we may draw the inference, either that David originally uttered the Psalm from the soul of the oppressed *righteous man*, or, that if he wrote it in reference to a particular occasion, he generalized his own experience.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* Calvin: "David, in laying, as it were, in the balances all the powers of earth and hell, considers the whole as lighter than a feather, because God alone will in the end infinitely outweigh it all." He represents misery and trouble under the figure of darkness, and the Lord, who graciously sends help,

under that of light, which enlightens the darkness: compare Micah vii. 8, "If I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light." What, therefore, he first expresses figuratively by "my light," he immediately expresses in proper language by "my salvation." The Psalmist recognises God as his light and his salvation, first, from his *word*, from the promises of divine aid which are held out in the law to the righteous, directly and indirectly, under the form of history, in the experience of those who stand on the same ground with himself, particularly the Patriarchs; and second, from his own personal *experience:* every case in which the Lord had manifested himself as the Psalmist's salvation, has strengthened his conviction that he is so. The question, "whom shall I," &c., throws aside, as it were, with indignation, every cause of fear. The Psalmist calls God the *strength* of his life, because he protects his life, of which his enemies seek to rob him, as surely as the strong walls of a fortified town defy the assaults of an enemy, and afford protection to the inhabitants.

Ver. 2. *When the wicked wretches come near against me, to eat my flesh, mine opponents and my enemies against me*: THEY *stumble and fall.* The case is, in the first instance, as it is also at ver. 3, a supposed one. But it is evident from the 6th and 12th verses, that the Psalmist really was in a situation very analogous to this supposed one. While the Psalmist rises above *possible* dangers, he, at the same time, rises above those also that are *real*, which he describes in stronger and more definite language, because a passing glance at those of inferior moment might have disturbed the view of the real state of affairs. Luther not at all correctly connects this verse with the one preceding it, by the word *wherefore*. It carries forward the thought: "whom should I fear, of whom should I be afraid, even though, *for example*, the wicked," &c. The idea of *hostile* approach does not lie in קרב, but in על, to come near *over* any one, so that one falls upon him, sets on him. The metaphor in *to eat my flesh*, is taken from savage beasts of prey. The ואיבי and צרי are not in apposition to מרעים. In that case, it is impossible to translate the לי. It is evident that this word cannot be redundant. When it appears to stand, as it does in Ps. cxliv. 2, it renders the *my* more emphatic than a simple affix could do: *my deliverer to me*, i.e., to me who had been specially mentioned, —MY *deliverer*. But in the case before us such an emphasis is unsuitable. It is necessary rather to supply בקרב, *though my*

opponents and enemies come near to me: and this is all the more natural, that קרב is elsewhere connected with ל, Job. xxxiii. 22. It is not without reason that the Psalmist gives great prominence to the word *evil doers.* For he cannot expect victory over his enemies unless he stand to them in the relationship of a *righteous man* to *the wicked:* this was the case in all the conflicts which David had to maintain. The המה is a word of emphasis,—*they,* not I, with whom this would assuredly be the case, did not the circumstance that the Lord is my light and my salvation disturb their otherwise very accurate calculations. The preterites נשלו and נפלו are explained from the confidence of faith.

Ver. 3. *Though an host encamp against me, yet my heart is not afraid; though war rise against me, yet in this case I am full of confidence.* This verse agrees remarkably with Psalm iii. 6. The מחנה is, in all probability, here, as at Gen. xxxii. 9, united to a feminine for the sake of the symmetry with תקום. The בזאת, "in this," is, "even in such circumstances, to all human appearance desperate:" compare Jer. xxvi. 27: Job i. 22. The exposition, "I trust *in this,* namely, that thou, O Lord, art my light and my salvation," is unnecessary, because though in other passages בטח is generally construed with the ב of the object, we do repeatedly meet with it in an absolute form, in Judges xviii. 7; Jer. xii. 5; Prov. xi. 5. It is moreover opposed by the analogy of the preceding clauses, which merely expand, "I am afraid of no one," without again pointing to the cause of the fearlessness. "I am full of confidence," corresponds particularly to "my heart is not afraid." Luther's translation depends on this exposition: "I trust in him," being only a free rendering.

Ver. 4. *One thing I desired of the Lord, after that I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to meditate thereon in his holy place.* The Lord is the Psalmist's light and salvation, and affords him protection against all enemies, and all dangers. On this account he has only one prayer, one wish,—if this be granted, happen what may,—namely, that the Lord, in whom everything else is comprehended, may abide with him, and that he may not lose his grace, or be shut out from fellowship with him. For the Lord, verse 5, protects *his own* in all dangers.—The change of tense in שאלתי and אבקש, is to be carefully attended to: it marks out that this desire and seeking are to

extend throughout the whole of the Psalmist's life. The preterite points to a line of conduct completed, concluded, but yet extending to the present time, Ew. Sm. Gr. 262, (Venema's *semper* is more correct than Schmidt's *jam olim*) the future marks more particularly the continuance of this present effort.—The prayer is a true one, only when it goes forth on the ground of effort and exertion, when the longing desire of the heart is directed toward the object.—The "dwelling in the house of the Lord," towards which the prayer and the desire are directed, is here, as in all other passages, (compare Psalm xxiii. 6; xv. 1), to be understood *figuratively* as equivalent to "being an inmate of God's house," "entertaining towards him child-like confidence," "enjoying his grace." The cause of this figurative language is, that the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple itself, bore a symbolical character, represented the connection between God and his people who dwelt with him spiritually there: compare the proof of this in Part III. of the Beitr. p. 831, &c.—It is for this reason that the Psalmist desires to be, and to continue to be, an inmate in God's house. To this the words point, "That I may behold," &c., that is, "that I may in this way behold what is inseparably connected therewith," &c. When God takes any man into the number of his *own people*, such a one beholds also his beauty, and enjoys the opportunity of meditating upon it in his sanctuary. נעם means always the beauty of the Lord: compare Psalm xc. 17, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us," *i.e.*, let it be made known in our experience, Zech. xi. 7.[1] They behold, that is, they experience, they know God as beautiful in his dealings. The expression in the 13th verse is exactly parallel: "to see the goodness of the Lord."—the בקר is always, "to search for," Lev. xiii. 36; xxvii. 33; Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12; "to meditate on," 2 Kings xvi. 15; Prov. xx. 25, in accordance with the Chaldaic usage, and the fundamental sense of the word, "to open," "to cleave;" compare Gesenius. As the word is never followed by ב of the object, the object of the inquiry and the meditation cannot be given in the בהיכלו, but must be drawn from what goes before: "and meditate *thereon*," namely, on the beauty of the Lord manifested in the experience of the inmates of his house, in his holy place. The *holy place*

[1] Venema: The beauty of the Lord here denotes whatever in the Lord is sweet, pleasant, and salutary to the sinner, and therefore his virtues of goodness and grace, together with all their signs and effects.

is mentioned as the place of meditation, because there *thanks* are offered to the Lord, for the manifestations of his beauty. This exposition is confirmed by the 6th verse, where the Psalmist expresses his hope that, being delivered by the Lord, he will bring forward early offerings in his *tabernacle:* compare also Psalm xxvi. 7, according to which the Psalmist lets the voice of *praise* be heard in the sanctuary, and makes known all God's wondrous works.—According to the usual interpretation, the Psalmist expresses a wish to be delivered from danger, to serve God undisturbed in the temple, and to enjoy the pleasure of looking upon the splendour of the sanctuary. It is translated, "that I may spend my life in the house of Jehovah, for the purpose of beholding the splendour of Jehovah, (Luther: 'the beautiful service of God,') and viewing his temple," (others, "repairing to his temple.") This translation, in the first place, is contrary to the *usus loquendi*, in three respects. It is altogether arbitrary to consider "to dwell in the house of the Lord" equivalent "to attend it carefully," "to abide in it:" compare against this at Psalm xxiii. 6. This difficulty is not removed by Hitzig's violent supposition that the Psalm was composed by a *priest:* for not even the priests dwelt in the temple. The נעם יהוה is arbitrarily translated by "the splendour of the Lord," and this is just as arbitrarily applied to the splendour of the sanctuary, or the service. בקר is never united with ב, and never means either "to view," or "to repair to." If we adhere to the strict rendering of the clause, "to behold the beauty of the Lord," &c., we shall be compelled to abandon the idea of outward dwelling in the house of the Lord; for that which is deduced from the dwelling of the Lord, cannot be regarded as the consequence of outward presence in the temple. This exposition is, moreover, opposed by all the parallel passages in which dwelling in the temple is spoken of: in all these the idea is that of *spiritual* presence: compare, for example, Psalm xxiii. The 5th verse is also opposed to it. The thought of it, "for he protects me," is not at all in its proper place, if assigned as a reason why the Psalmist wishes to be in the temple: this is clear from the fruitless attempt of De Wette to refer the "for," with which he does not know how to begin, not to our verse, but to the first paragraph of the Psalm (v. 1—3). It is also altogether inadmissible to understand the "hiding in the pavilion," and the

"concealing in the tabernacle of the Lord," in a figurative sense, if we interpret literally the "dwelling in his house." Lastly, it is only, if we adopt the figurative sense of "dwelling in the house of the Lord," that we can give any explanation of "*one* thing I desire of the Lord," &c. The one thing which gives the Psalmist strength and courage against the whole world is the favour of God, hence the one thing which he *desires* and *seeks after* is not his bodily presence in the temple, with which in such a connection a man can have nothing to do, but the possession of the favour of God. In reality, "to dwell in the house of the Lord" must be similar to "to have him for light and salvation." This is clear, moreover, from the circumstance that the same consequence is deduced from "the dwelling in the house of the Lord," in verse 5, which is deduced from "the Lord is my light and salvation" (1—5), namely, safety against all attacks of enemies: and also from the circumstance that in verse 6 assurance of victory in present trouble, is deduced from the two taken together, "the Lord is my light and my salvation," and "I dwell in the house of the Lord."

Ver. 5. *For he hides me in his pavilion in the time of trouble, he covers me in the covering of his tent, he lifts me up upon a rock.* The Psalmist here gives the ground why, in regard to the oppression of his enemies, "to dwell in the house of the Lord in the enjoyment of his favour," will be sufficient for him: viz. whom the Lord *loves*, him he also protects. Corresponding to the representation under the figure of dwelling with him in the temple, of the gracious relation in which God stands to his people, we have, in the first two clauses of this verse, the protection which is the consequence of this gracious relation, represented by the figure of a sure *place of refuge* and *covering*, which the Lord affords to his persecuted people, beside himself in his tabernacle. These two clauses have been misunderstood in two ways. First, by those who, like the Jewish expositors and Knapp, understand the words in a strictly literal sense, and suppose that David on one occasion found shelter in the holy tabernacle, and was in this manner delivered out of the hands of his enemies. This is opposed by the last clause, which must necessarily be taken in a figurative sense. Second, by those who, with De Wette, maintain that the pavilion and the tabernacle of this passage are not at all the holy place, but are only emblems of protection, taken from the master of a house, who gives protection in his

house to a stranger, from some peril to which he may be exposed. This is undoubtedly the origin of the figurative expression; but that the friendly pavilion and the friendly tabernacle are the holy place of the Lord, is clear from the corresponding expression, "the house of the Lord," in ver. 4, "I have only one wish, to abide in the house of the Lord, *for he hides* me in his house, or his tabernacle," and "his tabernacle" in 6th verse, "he hides me in his tabernacle, therefore shall I bring forward *thank-offerings* in his tabernacle." It will not do to refer to Psalm xxxi. 20, "thou keepest them secretly in a pavilion;" for there it is in *a* pavilion, here it is, in *his* pavilion. סבה, *a pavilion*, is used poetically for the *holy tabernacle* in Psalm lxxvi. 2. It has already been adverted to in the introduction, that the expression, "in his pavilion and in his tabernacle," involves in insuperable difficulty the supposition that the Psalm was composed at a period posterior to that of David. Solomon's temple, especially, could not possibly be called "a pavilion." The name, "tabernacle," might have been carried forward from the earlier to the later sanctuary; there is, however, no proof that it was.

Ver. 6. *And now mine head shall be lifted up above all mine enemies round about, and I will offer in his tabernacle offerings of joy, I will sing and praise the Lord.* This verse concludes the first strophe: in v. 1—5, the conviction that the Lord is the Psalmist's light and salvation, and that he dwells in the house of the Lord, gives him confidence against all *conceivable* dangers; *here*, in the possession of this favour of God, he is completely sure of victory in the difficulties in which he *now* finds himself. The ועתה is either "and now,"—quare etiam nunc in præsenti periculo, or it may be considered as the particle of inference, "and now, since it is so (compare Psalm ii. 10; xxxix. 7) I shall triumph securely over my present enemies." On, "my head shall be lifted up," compare Psalm iii. 3. The clause, "I will offer," &c., shows that the Psalmist feels as sure of deliverance as if he had already obtained it. He is already preparing to offer *thanks* for it. Joy-offerings are offerings which are accompanied with rejoicings for deliverance, and matter-of-fact rejoicings themselves. The תרועה stands here as in Numb. xxiii. 31, and in other passages, in the usual sense of "shouts of joy:" compare קול תודה in Psalm xxvi. 7. De Wette and other expositors give, "offerings of the sound of trumpets:" "the holy trumpets were blown at the burnt and thank-offerings," Num.

x. 10. But this passage refers only to the public thank-offerings on holy-days. The trumpets were never used at private offerings.

At the beginning of the second strophe, the tone changes at once. Instead of triumphant confidence, we have mournful supplication. But the last verse of the first strophe softens the transition. There the Psalmist has descended from the serene heights of heaven to the earth: he has begun to turn from the contemplation of *possible* dangers, in which he conquers, through the aid of his heavenly helper, to whom in faith he rises, to the consideration of those that are *real*. At first the tone of triumph still continues: the danger is rather too small than too great for him. But, in proportion as he gets a nearer view of it, it becomes greater, he is terrified, and begins to sink, and retains only so much of his early confidence as to enable him to cry out, and to say, "Lord, help me." But this is in reality a *very great deal*, and for a man who has begun to take to heart the sufferings and the dangers of this life, it is really enough.—It is in this transition from triumphant confidence to mournful supplication, that is to be found the *truth* of the Psalm, and also much of its practical power. We could not have found ourselves in it, had the tone of triumph been continued to the end. The first strophe is sufficient only for *painted* suffering.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, and be gracious to me, and answer me.* In reference to קולי אקרא, compare what has been said on Psalm iii. 4. The קולי is not redundant, it indicates a *loud* cry.

Ver. 8. *My heart always holds before thee thy word, "seek my face," thy face, O Lord, I do seek.* As always, so particularly now, the heart of the Psalmist in trouble is turned towards God, expecting deliverance from him alone, and whoever is in such a state of mind is all the more sure of being delivered by God, inasmuch as his word commands us to seek him in trouble, and promises that those who seek shall find him. The אמר and the אבקש stand in the same relation to each other as the שאלתי and the אבקש do in verse 4: *always and particularly now.* It is impossible to translate simply, *my heart says to thee.* There was no need for inserting "thy word," which we have supplied, inasmuch as the clause, "seek my face," shows by its form that what the Psalmist says to God is only an echo of what God says to his people. "To seek the face of any one," is to "seek to be admitted to his presence:" compare Prov. xxix. 26, "Many

seek the ruler's face." As admission into the presence is imparted to those who enjoy the favour of the ruler, is the mark and expression of this favour, and because it is so, is *sought after*, so, to seek the face of the Lord is to seek to be admitted into his presence, and in reality to seek his favour: compare 2 Sam. xxi. 1, "There was a famine in the days of David, and David sought the face of the Lord," Psalm xxiv. 6, and cv. 4. In reality, "to seek the face of the Lord," is "to seek the Lord," 2 Sam. xii. 16; 2 Chron. xx. 4; xv. 2. "The *word* of God, to which the Psalmist here refers, occurs, though not exactly in the same terms, in Deut. iv. 29, "and ye seek from thence the Lord thy God, and thou findest him, if thou seek him with all thy heart (compare here, 'my *heart* says to thee,') and with all thy soul." The *seeking* of the Lord, and the *finding* him, are there placed in inseparable connection with each other. Hosea v. 15 refers, like the passage before us, to the same expression: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and *seek my face*, in their affliction, (literally from Deut.) they will enquire after me:" compare the Beitr. ii. p. 61. There, as here, "to seek the face of God" is substituted for "to seek God."—Muis, De Wette, and other interpreters, translate the first words: "my heart speaks of thee." But, in this way the signification of the preterite is misunderstood, the אמר with ל signifies, with a few exceptions, "to speak to some one," and the sense of, "to speak of one," is unsupported. "To seek the face of the Lord," is considered as equivalent to, "to repair to the temple." But this sense is one in which the phrase is never used, and, in the case before us, it is excluded both by the reference to the fundamental passage, and by what follows in the next verse, "*hide* not thy face:" the whole scope and connection, moreover, are altogether against any reference to repairing to the temple.—After the example of the Vulgate, "de te dixit cor meum: require O facies mea," Hitzig translates, "my heart speaks of thee, *Seek him, my face.*" But, irrespective of all other considerations, the phrase בקש פני יהוה will not admit of such a rendering.

Ver. 9. *Hide not thy face from me, drive not away thy servant in anger, thou who hast always been my helper; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God, my salvation.* The "hiding" of the face stands opposed to the "showing" of it, which God in his word hath promised to those who *seek* it with all their heart. The

אל תט—the apoc. fut. in Hithp.—is not to be translated, "turn not away," but "drive not away:" compare דחה in the sense of "to set aside," "to put aside," which suits very well to the hiding of the face in Job xxiv. 4, compare also xxxvi. 18; 2 Sam. iii. 27. "Thy servant," contains in it the ground of the prayer; do not act towards thy servant as thou actest only towards the *wicked.*" The ground is given still more impressively in what follows: "thou who hast always been my helper." The expression at the conclusion, "my salvation-God," corresponds to this, which must therefore denote the abiding relation in which God stands to the Psalmist, on which he grounds his prayer for special deliverance. The היית, in the preterite, denotes past time stretching forward to the present.

Ver. 10. *For my father and my mother forsook me, and the Lord takes me up.* The Psalmist gives the reason why he had called upon the Lord for assistance so mournfully in the preceding verse; the love of God is the only love that is sure, in heaven, or on earth: the love of *men* disappears on the approach of misfortune, in which they recognise a dispensation to renounce love; but the love of God is proved most gloriously in affliction; the afflicted are above all others dear to him.—In the clause, "father and mother have forsaken me," the Psalmist clearly speaks of something which *had already happened;* and the translation, "*though* they forsake me," is inadmissible. But there is no reason why we should feel ourselves necessitated to seek for an individual reference. Every one who is in great trouble may speak in this manner. Father and mother stand as an individualizing reference for those who are united to us by the closest ties, and in whom love towards us when we are in a state of suffering, might be expected to continue the longest. Whoever has no parents, puts his *friends* in their room. It lies deep in the being of human nature that suffering should cool, if it does not extinguish, love: men are only too much inclined to seek in the sufferer the cause of this. This is seen in the case of the friends and the wife of Job, compare also Psalm lxxxviii. 8. The proverb, "that the unfortunate may lay their account with contempt," is verified even in the case of nearest relatives. David had, in all probability, had experience of the instability of human love in suffering, under the very form to which he here refers, and made choice of this expression in reference to his own personal experience. His parents, whom,

according to 1 Sam. xxii. 3, he took care of in misfortune, were, assuredly, on many occasions, (from the character of human nature it could scarcely be otherwise) ill pleased with him by whom their peace had been so often disturbed, and he must have had to bear with many hard speeches at their hand. *The Lord takes me up,* like one who takes a weary wanderer—a fugitive who has lost his way—into his house, and treats him kindly: compare ver. 5; Jos. xx. 4; Judges xix. 5.

Ver. 11. *Teach me, O Lord, thy way, and lead me in an even path, because of mine enemies.* Most expositors are of opinion that the Psalmist prays that the Lord would lead him by his Spirit and preserve him from sin. Calvin saw that this sense would not do in connection with what precedes and follows, where the whole language is about Divine assistance against enemies. The way of the Lord here is the way of deliverance: this limitation flows from the person who is speaking, for the paths of God can be only paths of safety for his servants. The *even* path denotes the opposition to the stones and rocks which rendered the Psalmist's progress through life so difficult. Psalm xxv. 4 is exactly parallel, where we met with the same false exposition: compare also Ps. xxvi. 12. "Because of mine enemies," points out the cause which is more fully opened up in the following verse, why the Psalmist stood so much in need of Divine guidance and help.

Ver. 12. *Give me not over to the will of mine enemies, for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as breathe violence. The soul* of the enemies stands for their passions, because the soul is wholly occupied by these. By "the false witnesses," and "such as breathe violence," two classes of enemies are meant, those who seek to accomplish their ardent wish to annihilate the righteous man by cunning lies and deceit, and by false and slanderous accusations; and, second, those who employ open violence. The יפח is the *status constructus* of the adjective יָפֵחַ. This is to be derived not from יפח, but from the fut. Hithp. of פוח, which occurs in the same form in Hab. ii. 3: compare יָרֵב from ריב. "Those who breathe violence," (not who breathe out) are "those whose every breath is violence:" compare Prov. vi. 19, "A false witness that speaketh (lit. *breatheth*) lies," "breathing threatenings and slaughter,"

Acts ix. 9. "Spirare minas" in Latin, and "κακιας καὶ συκοφαντιας πνεῖ in Aristoph.

The conclusion now follows, bringing together, within a narrow compass, the contents of the Psalm, trouble and distress in the world, and hope in God.

Ver. 13. *If I had not believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living,* . . . . . That this verse is not to be immediately connected with what goes before, but marks the beginning of the *conclusion,* is clear from this, that whereas, in the former verses, God is addressed, here he is spoken of, and that we have here contained the foundation for the exhortation of the last verse, to trust in God.—Had the Psalmist brought the sentence to a conclusion, he would have added, I would have yielded to *despair,* or I would have *been ruined.* This fatal word, however, he finds it very difficult to utter, and ere he does so, a voice within is raised, exhorting him to continue firmer and firmer in his trust in God, whom he designated as his only ground of hope. Among all the passages which contain similar aposiopeses, there is none so exactly like the one before us, as Gen. xxxi. 42, "except (לוּלֵי) the God of my fathers, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me, . . . (it would have been all over with me); for thou wouldst have sent me away empty." Compare also Gen. l. 15; Zech. vi. 15. Ewald, p. 663. In this aposiopesis the Masorites have not been able to find their feet: they put their *puncta extraordinaria* over the לוּלֵי, which seems to have troubled them: these are just as little deserving of regard as the Keris. The old translators, with the exception of the Chaldaic, leave out the לוּלֵי altogether: no conclusion, however, ought to be drawn from this against it; they may have been of the same opinion as De Wette, who remarks "we may very easily get quit of it, seeing it yields no very suitable sense." In favour of the genuineness of לוּלֵי, it may be remarked, that it would certainly never occur to any one to insert it, and that on deep reflection, (such, however, as was not likely to lead to a gloss,) it appears to be indispensably necessary to complete the sense. The bare and unconditional clause, "I believe to see," &c., is unsuitable and incongruous, after the anxious prayer of the preceding verse for deliverance from false witnesses, and those who breathe violence, whose look cries out to the Psalmist that he is *lost;*

and then the exhortation of the following verse makes it evident that weakness had come over the Psalmist, and that danger had assailed him with great violence: the weakness is here, the remedy is there. The טוב יהוה is explained by several interpreters as "the good things of the Lord," "his blessings and acts of kindness,"—Gesenius: "optima dei munera." But טוב יהוה always signifies the "goodness of God," "the goodness of his nature:" compare Psalm xxv. 7; xxxi. 19; Zech. ix. 17, where the goodness and the beauty of the Lord occur together, (Christology, p. 3, p. 135, 6,) and this sense is especially demanded here by the corresponding clause in ver. 4, נעם יהוה. To see the goodness of the Lord, is to experience his excellence. The "land of the living" stands in opposition to "the land of the dead," or "Sheol;" compare Jer. xxxviii. 11; Ez. xxvi. 20; xxxii. 32. The reference revived by Claus and Stier to the "life to come," has been completely set aside by Muis. It is assuredly in this life, ere he "go whence he shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death," Job x. 21, into which his enemies are on the point of sending him, that the Psalmist hopes to see the goodness of the Lord. The writers of the Psalms are far removed from that resignation, which gives up to the ungodly every thing on this side the grave. Their faith is far too fresh and powerful for this.

Ver. 14. The reflection, that the grace of God is his only ground of hope, and that but for it, his own weakness, and the fury and might of his enemies, would have brought him into an irremediable condition, and left him the prey of despair, gives the Psalmist occasion to exhort himself to trust in the Lord.—*Wait on the Lord, be strong, and may he strengthen thy heart, and wait upon the Lord.* The strong part of the soul speaks to the weak, as is the case throughout the whole of the 42d and 43d Psalms. We cannot entertain the idea, that the Psalmist is addressing the pious, and that he makes an application of his own experience to the case of those in similar circumstances. In this way, the connection with the 13th verse would be altogether broken. The individual who is here exhorted to trust in God, must be the same one who had there declared, that but for his trust in God, he must have become the victim of *despair*. Instead of, "may he strengthen thy heart," most translators have, "may thy heart get strong." But we cannot give up the usual sense of the Hiph. either here or in the passage, Ps. xxxi.

25;—these are the only two passages in which the Hiph. of אמץ occurs. And the strictly grammatical translation in the passage before us, brings out a much finer meaning. The Psalmist, after having exhorted himself to be strong, turns round to him who alone can give the strength to comply with this exhortation. He does not express *his name*, because none but he who is the fountain of all strength can be thought of, when we speak of being strengthened. There is something very great in the expression, "be strong." Calvin: "When trembling comes upon thee, when temptation shaketh thy faith, when the feelings of thy flesh are driven hither and thither, *be not overcome*, but rather rise up with indefatigable power of mind." Nature cannot accomplish this; none but he can bring it about, who giveth might to the weary and sufficient strength to the weak. He gives not only *outward* strength, but also that which is inward; he not only gives *deliverance* to those who trust in him, but he also works trust in him.

PSALM XXVIII.

The Psalmist first sends forth the petition that he may be heard in his prayer, remarking, that unless this be done, he is given over to irremediable destruction. This forms the introduction, (ver. 1). After repeating this petition at the beginning of the first division, he unfolds his request, viz., that God would not entangle *him* in that irremediable destruction which is the portion of the *wicked*, and would inflict upon *these*, particularly his *enemies*, the *punishment* which they deserve, ver. 2—5. He obtains assurance of *being heard*, and praises the Lord as the Saviour of his anointed and of his people, ver. 6—8. The *conclusion*, ver. 9, contains the prayer that the Lord would reveal himself *in all future time*, as he had done *on the present occasion*, as the Saviour of his *people*.

That ver. 1 is to be considered as *the introduction*, and ver. 9, which corresponds to it, as *the conclusion*, is obvious, not only from the contents, but also from the circumstance that the assurance of being heard (ver. 6), which verbally is appended to the prayer, does not belong to the first but to the second verse. The main division of the Psalm thus consists of *seven* verses. This number is again divided, as it frequently is, into *a four* and

a three. The strophe of confidence points to the Mosaic blessing, not only by the *three verses,* but also by the *threefold* repetition of the word Jehovah. Any further remarks on the formal arrangement we shall make in the introduction to Ps. xxix., which, along with the one now before us, makes up one pair. We shall there find the arrangement 1. 7. 1. proposed here, confirmed, and, at the same time, we shall see why Jehovah occurs here, in all, five times.

The *situation* is that of one who is in great danger, and is utterly lost unless the Lord help (ver. 1); who prays *earnestly* for deliverance (ver. 2—6); and is threatened with *destruction* (ver. 3).

The person who speaks is a righteous man (ver. 3); who is at the same time the Lord's anointed (ver. 8); and whose cause is identical with that of *the people* (ver. 8, 9). It is here that lies the difference between this Psalm and Psalm xxvi. The situation and the fundamental thought in both are that God cannot bind up together in similarity of outward fate those who inwardly are different,—that the lot of the wicked cannot be the same as that of the righteous. It is the oppressed *righteous man* in general that there speaks, here it is specially the oppressed *riyhteous King.*

The contents of the Psalm throughout apply very well to David during the time of Absalom's rebellion, when, to all appearance, the design of God was that the lots of the righteous and the wicked should be exchanged; the people were brought into danger on account of the king; and the enemies especially were those, who "spoke peace to their neighbours, while mischief was in their hearts." But in the absence of all special historical circumstances, it is in the highest degree probable, that the design of David in composing the Psalm, was to draw out a form of prayer, grounded on his own experience at this time, for the use of his successors, whom he seems to have had continually in his eye after the communication made to him by Nathan; compare Psalm xviii. 50. If this be the case, it is manifest, at the same time, that the Psalm in reality possesses a didactic and hortatory character:—the righteous king, in a time of severe trouble, desires to set before his eyes the righteous judgment of God, which will not permit the righteous to be involved in the lot of the wicked, nor the wicked to go unpunished; to be calm and composed in dependence on this; and to wait with confident ex-

pectation for the help of God. This didactic tendency is particularly obvious in the 5th verse, where the form of address to God is abandoned.

The assertion of Ewald and Hitzig, that the passage, from the 6th to the 9th verse, was first written after the danger had gone past, is dependent on the false idea that the Psalm has an individual character, proceeds from mistaking the nature of the transitions in the Psalm, and overlooks the truth that faith is the substance—the ὑποστασις—of things hoped for, Heb. xi. 1.

Ver. 1. *Unto thee, O Lord, do I cry, my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like those who go down to hell.* The expression, "my rock," points to the immutability, the certainty, and the inviolable truth of God: compare Ps. xviii. 1, xix. 14, p. 344. This address contains in it the ground of the prayer, "be not silent." The true God, who chastises his people, but does not give them over to death, cannot be silent, when circumstances are such, that it may with truth be said, that to be silent is the same as to bring *destruction.* The "be not silent *from* me," needs nothing to be supplied. The idea of "distance from" clearly lies wrapped up in that of "silence," and, on the other hand, every *answer* implies the idea of approach and nearness of God. "Lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like," &c., literally, "lest thou be silent from me, and I become like," &c., implies, "lest in the great danger to which I am now exposed, I become past deliverance." Calvin: nullus sum, si a me discesseris; nisi tu unus succurras, perii. The בור, *a pit,* is used in the sense of the grave, Is. xiv. 19; of Sheol, Is. xiv. 15, and Ps. xxx. 3. We are to take this probably in a general sense in the frequently occurring phrase יורדי בור. For this designates, generally, "the dead." But as we must here translate, "those who go down to the pit," "not those who have gone down," we must think of the long journey to Sheol, and not of the short journey to the grave.

Ver. 2. *Hear the voice of my supplication when I cry to thee, when I lift my hands to thy holy oracle.* The lifting of the hands was the usual attitude of prayer, not only among the Israelites, comp. Ex. ix. 29, xvii. 11, 12, 1 Kings viii. 54, Ps. lxiii. 4, Lam. iii. 41, 1 Tim. ii. 8; but also among the heathen, comp. the passages in Iken, Dissert. i. p. 220. The lifting up of the hands symbolized the lifting up of the heart. That the Psalmist lifted up his hands, not to heaven, but to the most holy place, where

was the ark of the covenant, (comp. 1 Kings vi. 19), is to be understood in the same sense in which we call upon God only in Christ. God had, in most amiable condescension to the weakness of his people, who were unable to rise to that which is unseen, except through the medium of something visible, taken, as it were, a form in the midst of them, in anticipation of the incarnation of his Son, by which this want, which lies deep in the being of human nature, was satisfied in a manner infinitely more real: compare the Beitr. P. iii. p. 629, and at Ps. xxvi. 8. That by דביר is meant the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple, admits of no doubt. The derivation, however, and the import of the word, have been disputed. According to the ancient expositors, the most holy place was so termed, because it was from it that God returned answers to those who consulted him: Aquila and Symmachus χρηματιστήριον, Jerome λαλητήριον. Modern expositors, again, after the example of Simon and Iken, Diss. i. p. 214, give the word the sense of "the back part:" compare particularly Gesenius's Thes. It appears, however, that this exposition owes its introduction merely to the ground which has been assigned for considering the primary sense of כפרת to be "a covering,"—viz. awe for what is concealed. Etymologically, there can be no objection to the old exposition. דביר is properly, "what is said," and secondarily, "the place where it is said;" just as אסיף is, properly, "what is gathered," and then, "the season when the fruits are gathered." The appellation given to this part—the place where God speaks to his people, or converses with them—stands in most beautiful harmony with the appellation given to the whole, אהל מועד, the tabernacle of *meeting*, where God meets with his people. The most holy place is, as it were, the audience-chamber. But the peculiar ground for this exposition, which its opponents pass over altogether in silence, is given in those passages, Num. vii. 89, "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one *speaking with him* from off the mercy-seat, that was upon the ark of testimony:" and Ex. xxv. 22. Finally, the signification given by the old expositors answers remarkably well to the passage before us:—this passage alone is sufficient to refute the objection of Iken, that דביר is never used in a connection in which there is any reference to a speaking on the part of God. The Psalmist had prayed that God would not be silent to him,—that he would hear his

supplication. What, in these circumstances, could be more natural, than that he should stretch out his hands to the place where God *speaks* with his people, and that he should, with full confidence, look for an answer from thence to his cry for help?

Ver. 3. *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, who speak peace to their neighbours, and have mischief in their hearts.* There are marks of quotation to be supplied at the beginning of this verse. There are here given the *contents* of the prayer which God has been called upon in the preceding verses to hear: "that God would not deliver the Psalmist his servant over to destruction, for that, according to his own word, is the portion only of the wicked." מְשֹׁךְ is, "to draw," "to draw away," "to carry off:" com. Job xxiv. 22, Ez. xxxii. 20. In the parallel passage, Ps. xxvi. 9, the expression used is אַל תֹּאסֵף. The description of the character of the wicked, with whom the Psalmist desires that he would not be united in community of lot, is borrowed from that of his enemies: "David," says Venema, "tacitly transfers these crimes to his enemies, whose real character was what is here described." The description corresponds rather to domestic villains, who endeavour by the arts of dissimulation to gain their object, such as Absalom and his party, than to public enemies, whose weapons are those of open violence. The wicked are described as men, who conduct themselves as they ought to do only with their lips, but are hostile in their intentions and their deeds towards him, who, both by the special appointment of God, and by the laws of nature, is their *neighbour*, united to them by that common bond by which all the members of the church of God are united to each other, and, in addition to this, by the ties of tenderest affection. Between רֵעַ and רֵעָה there is a significant paronomasia.

Ver. 4. *Give them according to their conduct and according to their actions of wickedness; give them according to the work of their hands; make good to them their portion.* This is the second petition of the Psalmist. The first was, "that the Lord would not punish him with the wicked;" the second, which is here, is, "that he would not let the wicked go unpunished." *Them*, that is, the wicked and evil-doers, particularly, *my enemies*. The objection which has been taken against this prayer of the Psalmist, and so many others of a similar kind, is most assuredly an ungrounded one, in as much as the Psalmist prays that God

would do nothing more than what he necessarily must do according to his own being. "He practises the *jus talionis* according to his own righteousness. Justice reverberates: the unrighteous blow which I aim at another recoils, according to the moral government of the world, back upon myself." Compare Matth. vii. 2. On גמול compare at Ps. vii. 4.

Ver. 5. *Because they regard not the operation of the Lord, nor the work of his hand, therefore shall he destroy them and not build them.* The Psalmist recals to his recollection the *objective* ground of his petitions, on which his confidence of being heard depends: "it is not without thought that I have directed this prayer to God; for, inasmuch as they have no thought, &c., the Lord will destroy them and not build them up. I pray thus for that only, which the Lord will do and must do." The operation of the Lord, and the work of his hands, is the exercise of his righteous judgments against the ungodly. Compare Ps. xcii. 5; Isa. v. 12. Not to think on *these* is the very way to become involved in these judgments. For he who does not fear the judgment of God, gives himself over to iniquity. That the not regarding the operation of the Lord comes here into notice, in so far as it indicates wickedness, is obvious from the manifest reference to the preceding verse: "the operation *of the Lord* and the work of *his* hands, corresponds to "*their* conduct and the work of *their* hands. The idea conveyed consequently is, "because they do not regard the judgment of the Lord, and therefore give themselves over, without fear, to wickedness. Several interpreters give, "may he destroy them." But, with the optative form, we can see no reason why the *address to* God should have been given up. We cannot substitute for "not to build," "not to build up again." Nothing is more common than to find what had been expressed positively, repeated, for the sake of strengthening the impression, in a negative form.

Prayer according to the will of God, is followed now in natural order by confidence. The Psalmist obtains from the holy place the answer for which he had prayed, and makes this known in joyful expressions.

Ver. 6. *Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.* The words of the second verse are here designedly repeated, only the imperative is changed into the preterite. The Lord be thanked, exclaims the Psalmist joyfully, I *now possess* what I have prayed for.

Ver. 7. *The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I have been helped: therefore my heart rejoices; and with my song I will praise him.* The sense is: "the Lord is my Saviour: he has *manifested* himself as such by the help which he has granted me: therefore," &c. מִשִּׁירִי is properly, "out of my song;" in so far as the song is the fountain of the praise that goes out from it. אֲהוֹדֶנּוּ is the full poetic form, with the characteristic He of the Hiphel retained.

Ver. 8. *The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed one.* There follows here the song spoken of in the preceding verse, so that we are to read this verse as if with marks of quotation. The reason why we have "their," without any noun going before to which it might refer, obviously is, that the king in the preceding verses had prayed for himself, not so much as an individual, but as a king, and as thus one with his people. Compare ver. 9. The Psalmist so sunk his personality in his official position, and so identified himself with his people, that he wrote *simpliciter* לְמוֹ instead of לוֹ. When the Psalmist, in the second clause, applies to himself the title of "the anointed of the Lord" (compare Psalm xviii. 50), he must thereby be understood as expressly asserting, that the help which had been vouchsafed to him as king was therefore imparted in him to the people of God. On the plu. יְשׁוּעוֹת, compare at Ps. xviii. 50.

In the conclusion, the Psalmist prays that the Lord would do *eternally* that which he had now done.

Ver. 9. *Help thy people, and bless thine interitance, and feed them, and lift them up for ever.* On the first clause, compare the fundamental passage, Deut. ix. 29; "They are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and thine outstretched arm." On "feed them," compare Ps. xxiii. 1. On "lift them up," 2 Sam. v. 12. Several expositors give, "carry them," and refer to Is. xl. 11. But נשׂא never signifies in Pi "to carry" not even in Is. lxiii. 9, but always "to lift up," "to lift on high," "to prop up."

PSALM XXIX.

The key to the interpretation of this Psalm is to be found in its conclusion: "the Lord sitteth enthroned as King for ever: the Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless

his people through peace." From this it is obvious that the Psalm has no *personal* reference, but that the Psalmist has sung it from *the soul of the people*, the congregation of God, and for their edification. Hence also it is obvious that the *situation* is that of the suffering, the danger, and the hostile oppression of the people of God, and of the fear of the little flock in view of the might of the world Hence it is clear from what point of view we are to contemplate all that goes before. "That the Lord has might," which is the substance of the whole Psalm, is introduced merely as the foundation for this, "the Lord will give might." The majesty of God in nature is described only for this reason:—that the Church may thus see that there is a shield ready prepared for her against all painful cares.

In the *introduction*, ver. 1 and 2, the servants of God in the heavenly world are exhorted to give to the Lord glory and strength. In the *main division*, ver. 3—9, the Psalmist describes the manifestation of Divine glory and strength which forms the basis of this exhortation. As the sequence of this manifestation,—the revelation of the glory of God in nature,—the celestial servants of God comply with the exhortation given them in the 1st and 2d verses: *in his temple every one says, "Glory!"* The *conclusion* (in ver. 10 and 11,) expresses the hope and confidence which springs up for the church of God out of this manifestation of the Divine glory and majesty:—if her God is such a God, her own powerlessness need give her no concern.

There is no ground for the idea that the Psalm was occasioned by the sight of a thunder-storm. "The freshness of the painting, the vigorous conceptions, and the rapid transitions of the whole," will give rise to this view only when low ideas are entertained of the power of *poetry*. According to the analogy of Ps. xvii. and Job xxxvii., where, in the case of similar descriptions of nature, no one ever thought of any outward occasion, it was *in spirit* that David here also heard the "voice of God."

The Psalm before us gives us a very instructive lesson as to how we ought to interpret the language of nature, and to turn it to our own edification. Every thunder-storm, every hurricane, should tell us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church of God, or against ourselves, if we are really members of that Church and servants of God. Everything depends on our being sure of our condition. The revelations of God in nature speak *a double language:* they speak to every man according to

his own spiritual condition. The thunder-storm, for example, is a matter-of-fact *promise* to the pious—to the Church of God, while to the ungodly—to the world—it is a matter-of-fact *threatening*. Whoever feels assured of the love of God, sees, in the manifestation of the omnipotence of God, a ground of consolation; whereas to those who are conscious of being objects of the Divine displeasure, the sentiment inspired by such appearances is that of terror.

The artificial arrangement of the Psalm is seen not only in the circumstance, that the introduction and also the conclusion consist each of two verses, and that the description of the thunder-storm occupies exactly seven verses, but also in the positions of the *names of God*. In the introduction and conclusion the name, Jehovah, occurs in every clause, that is, eight times in all,—which can scarcely be accidental. In the main body, the "voice of the Lord" occurs seven times, (Luther has introduced an eighth voice of the Lord,) which, as the number of verses is exactly the same, seven, cannot be regarded as accidental. As the seven thunders of the Apocalypse (x. 3, 4,) were obviously borrowed from this Psalm, it is clear that attention must have been directed very early to these appearances. In like manner, it can scarcely be considered accidental that the name Jehovah should occur, in all, in the main division, ten times. The signature of completion indicates that it is complete and concluded within itself. Köster's idea that this artificial arrangement is too great for David, requires no further refutation, after the discoveries which we have made in the preceding Psalms. In fact it is characteristic of David to aim at the highest possible kind of artificial arrangement.

The Psalm before us is united to the 28th, and forms with it one pair. The *fundamental idea* in both Psalms is the same, and is expressed in both, to all appearance designedly, in the same words: compare "the Lord is their strength," Psalm xxviii. 8, with "the Lord will give strength to his people," xxix. 11;—the relation of לְמוֹ to לְעַמּוֹ is obvious. The differences also render still more evident the design to draw attention to the connection between the two Psalms, than even an unlimited agreement, which might have been accidental. The distinction between the two Psalms is, that the Psalmist in the 26th, has to do with domestic, and here, with foreign enemies. Then, there is a very striking agreement in the arrangement of

the two Psalms: in the one, there is an introduction and a conclusion of one verse, in both a main division of seven verses, and, in the other, an introduction and a conclusion of two verses. Further, the nine verses of the 28th, and the eleven of the 29th, Psalm, make up together two decades,—the verse which is wanting in the one Psalm, being supplied from the other. Finally, the five repetitions of the name Jehovah in the 28th, mark it out as a half—as incomplete: compare on the number five as the signature of incompleteness, the divided ten, Bähr. Symb. P. 1. p. 183. Still more remarkable is the circumstance, that the five repetitions of the name Jehovah in the preceding Psalm, the eight repetitions of it in the introduction and conclusion of this one, together with the seven repetitions of "the voice of God," make up the number twenty, which is exactly the number of verses in both Psalms.

Those who are opposed to the idea of attaching any importance to the numbers in the arrangement of the Psalms, and are suspicious as to the existence of any design in the positions of the names of God, and of the juxtaposition of two Psalms as one pair, through which the same, or a similar train of thought may run, (although as to this latter point none of the ancient expositors felt any difficulty), and are disposed to bring forward the obvious objection of artificial arrangement or conceit, would do well to bestow a thorough examination on those two Psalms: those who do so will scarcely fail of obtaining new light on the matter.

Ver. 1. *Give to the Lord, ye sons of God, give to the Lord glory and strength.* The call addressed to the celestial servants of God, to praise his glory and strength, announces that the manifestations of these are to be gloriously set forth in what follows. If the highest creatures of God—the angels—must humble themselves in the dust before these manifestations, and if they feel themselves, in consequence of these, called upon to express their devout acknowledgment, and to give utterance to liveliest praise, should not the servants of God on earth be led thereby to banish from their minds all care and all fear, deeply impressed by a sense of the presence of him "who appointeth to the clouds, to the air, and to the wind, their way, their course, their path, and who findeth out a way where none can trace him." The Beni Elim are the same as those who, in other passages, are called Beni Elohim. In both cases, the explanation

of the plural seems to lie in the idea, that the Divine unity is a unity, not of poverty, but of riches. In the one true God all that fulness is concentrated which the heathens divided among their many gods. He alone is *instar multorum*. Elohim and Elim are the abbreviated forms of אלהי האלהים and אל אלים: compare Deut. x. 17, "for Jehovah, your God, he is the God of gods, and the Lord of Lords," Daniel xi. 36; Psalm cxxxvi. 2, 3. As this use of the plural of majesty is very widely spread throughout the language, (see on this subject the "Dissertation on the names of God in the Pentateuch, in the Beitr.,") there is no reason for adopting the idea of Ewald, that the plural is expressed doubled in the compound—an idea opposed by all the parallel passages, and which it is impossible on logical grounds to justify.—Very many of the older expositors understand by the Beni Elim the kings and the mighty men of the earth, referring to Psalm xcvi. 7, where, instead of Beni Elim, we find "kindreds of the people" introduced. This exposition has been partially revived by Köster. "Sons of God," he supposes, is an expression which may be applied to whatever is powerful, to the angels in heaven, and to kings on the earth. But, that the mention of angels is peculiarly suitable here, appears from comparing the really parallel passages, Psalm ciii. 20, 21: "bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word: bless the Lord, ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure:" and Isaiah vi. where the seraphim who stand round the throne of God, sing, *Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of his glory*, and ascribe to the Lord glory and might. Not only is Beni Elohim, but also Beni Elim, used in other passages very decidedly of angels: See Psalm lxxxix. 6. On the other hand, neither Beni Elim, nor Beni Elohim, nor Beni Eljon, is ever used of the mighty men of the earth: for, in Psalm lxxxii. 6, to which Köster appeals, it is distinctly denied that the mighty ones of the earth are the sons of God: "I thought that ye were gods, and sons of the Highest, all of you, but ye shall die as men." Finally, the 9th verse is decisive against the reference to the mighty ones of the earth, where everything in the temple of God says, "glory!" It is impossible here to think of the earthly temple, for the rulers of the nations assuredly are not there. Nothing but the heavenly sanctuary can be meant, in which the angels make known the praise of God. Most assuredly,

however, there is an indirect reference made, in the passage before us, to the potentates of earth, and it is to this that the application made in Psalm xcvi. 7, &c. of the first and second verses refers:—if the angels are exhorted to praise the glory and the might of God, the church of God may be satisfied that she has very little reason to quail before the potentates of earth,—the glory and the might of her God, which even the angels devoutly praise, is a sufficient ground of confidence in the face of a whole hostile world.—Several expositors take "glory" here in the sense of praise, and עז in the sense of renown. But, that כבוד is rather to be understood of "glory," is evident from the clause, "give to the Lord the glory of his name," and, that עז signifies here, as it always does, "strength," is evident from the connection, in which the expression, "the Lord will give strength to his people," in the conclusion, stands to the clause, "give to the Lord strength," at the opening of the Psalm: he has strength, therefore he will give strength. This exposition, moreover, is refuted by the parallel passage, Psalm xcvi. 6, 7; "strength is in his holy place, give to the Lord strength," and, by the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 3: "ascribe ye greatness to our God." In the fundamental passage, and in those borrowed from it, "to give," is "to ascribe glory, strength, greatness to God," "to recognise these as present," "to glorify him accordingly." The design of ver. 1—9, is to awaken the mind to a vivid perception of the truth, that the Lord *possesses* glory and strength: from this the inference which concludes the whole is drawn, that the Lord will give strength to his people.

Ver. 2. *Give to the Lord the glory of his name, adore the Lord in holy attire.* The name of the Lord is used as signifying the product of his deeds: the glory of his name is the glory which belongs to him as resulting from his glorious manifestations and deeds. The expression, "in holy attire," is equivalent in sense to "with deep reverence." As the earthly priests, before engaging in the service of God, must put off their usual clothing, and clothe themselves in *holy garments* (the expression is used in this sense in 2 Chron. xx. 21: compare also Ps. cx. 3; xcvi. 9), so must the angels, his servants in heaven, do the same. Their usual clothing is too mean to allow of their drawing near in it to their holy and exalted Lord, and testifying that reve-

rence, with which the glorious manifestations of his omnipotence have filled their minds.

There follows now the description of that revelation of the glory of God in a thunder-storm, which formed the basis of the preceding call to the angels to do him homage.

Ver. 3. *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.* The "Jehovah" of the first clause, is supplemented in the second, and the "water" in the third. "The voice of the Lord" is the thunder, but only for believers. An ungodly Hebrew would assuredly not consider it as such. Every gentle breath of air is also the voice of the Lord: all nature proclaims his glory: God speaks in everything to men. But because our ears are dull of hearing, that especially is called his voice, by which he speaks in loudest tones, and proclaims to us, in spite of all unwillingness on our part to hear, his omnipotence and his majesty. The "waters" are the clouds,—"the waters which are above the firmament," Gen. i. 7, "the dark waters," Ps. xviii. 11, "the multitude of waters," Jer. x. 13: compare Ps. lxxvii. 17, Job xxxvi. 28. Several interpreters apply the term to the waters of the sea and rivers. But the word "many," in the last clause, is decisive against this; it shows that the waters form a part of the storm itself; their multiplicity is of importance only in this point of view, and is introduced evidently for the purpose of bringing more prominently forward the greatness of God. The reference to God as "the God of glory" points back to ver. 1 and 2, and shows that the description which begins in our verse, serves as a basis to the exhortation which is there addressed to the angels to praise God.

Ver. 4. *The voice of the Lord is power: the voice of the Lord is majesty.* It is generally remarked that בְּ with the substantive supplies the place of the adjective. But in this way the article is left altogether out of sight. The בְּ in this passage must rather be considered as indicating that in which the Being of anything consists: Ewald's Sm. Gr. p. 528. The voice of God has its essence in the power and majesty which appear in it: it is, as it were, power and majesty itself.

Ver. 5. *The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.* The lightning is here, as it is also at ver. 7, and Ex. ix. 28, considered as an appendix to the thunder. The cedar is named, as being the queen of the forest,

and in the way of climax, the cedars of Lebanon are introduced in the second clause, because they are the stateliest of all. With the same omnipotence with which God breaks the cedars of Lebanon, he can also annihilate the mighty ones of earth, (frequently represented by this emblem,) who threaten to endanger his church.

Ver. 6. *And he maketh them to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young buffalo.* The "them" must be referred to the cedars. As the skipping of *the trees*, however, is only the consequence of the skipping of *the hills*, these also are mentioned in the second clause. Sirion is, according to Deut. iii. 9, the Sidonian name of Hermon. Terms of rare occurrence and of antiquated character are congenial to poetry. Jo. Arndt has, with great accuracy, expressed the practical reference of this verse: "Just as in great storms the hills quiver and quake before the thunder, so our beloved God is able by his word to make the proud and lofty quiver and quake." Schmid, in like manner: "sic etiam hostes Jehovæ cum omni sua potentia coram ipso irato dissilient, fulminibus judiciorum ejus disjecti."

Ver. 7. *The voice of the Lord heweth with flames of fire.* The brevity of this verse depicts the rapid motion of the lightning, which comes in here as the wounding instrument in the hands of the voice of the Lord, the weapon with which it adds destruction to terror. The verb חצב means always to hew, never to cleave, or to scatter, so that the expositions, "he scatters," "he casts abroad," *i. e.* "fiery thunderbolts," are to be rejected, compare Hos. vi. 5; Is. li. 9, where חצב is used in speaking of an avenging God. The להבות אש is in the accusative, (comp. Ew. § 512), "with flames of fire." It stands related to the voice of God, as what is particular does to what is general.

Ver. 8. *The voice of the Lord maketh the wilderness to quiver, the voice of the Lord maketh the wilderness of Kadesh to quiver.* Expositors ask why the *wilderness* is represented as quivering by the thunder. The only correct answer is, that the wilderness gives the impression of something great, immense, terrible, compare Deut. i. 19, "the great and terrible wilderness;" viii. 15, "who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, where were serpents, and scorpions, and drought;" Deut. xxxii. 10, "he found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness." The wilderness is, next to the hills, the most appropriate symbol of the power of the world; its quivering be-

fore the voice of the Lord must convince every pious mind of the folly of giving way to fear before the might of the world. In this way we see a very good reason why, as an ascending climax, there is introduced in the second clause the particularly horrible wilderness of Kadesh, the northern part of the Arabian desert. It forms, as it were, one pair with Lebanon and Sirion. The symbols of the power of the world on the north and south of the Lord's land are overwhelmed with terror at his voice. This parallelism with Lebanon explains why that part of the terrible Arabian desert is mentioned which borders immediately on the land of Canaan.

Ver. 9. *The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to cast their young, and sirips the forest, and in his temple everything says "Glory."* The opposition between the hinds and the forest tends to impress upon our minds, that the Lord, in a thunder-storm, makes known his power over *every* created thing; that which is great shall not escape him because of its greatness, nor that which is little because of its littleness. The יחוללי pih. from חול, can only be translated "makes them bring forth," *i. e.* "so terrifies them with the loud peals of thunder that they cast their young before the time;" this is evident from Job xxxix. 1, compare also 1 Sam. iv. 19. According to verse 3 of Job xxxix. the hinds bring forth their young *easily*, so that there can be no room for the idea of Bochart and others being referred to here, that they bring forth with difficulty. "It strips the forests," is "it strips them of their attire, their branches and leaves." The Chaldee has correctly given the sense of the last words "in his upper sanctuary all his servants praise his glory before him." A common exposition is, the whole *universe*, heaven, and earth, and sea, together with all that they contain, are awed by the glory of the Lord, as seen in a thunder-storm, and feel themselves called upon to praise him. But the only correct point in this exposition, is its opposition to another, according to which, by "the temple," is meant "the temple at Jerusalem." The temple of God, however, is much rather according to xi. 4: xviii. 6, his heavenly dwelling place, and those who there praise his glory, are the angels. The correctness of this interpretation appears also from v. 1 and 2. The angels in this verse, after they have seen the Divine glory, comply with the exhortation which the Psalmist had addressed to them, grounded upon that manifestation. If they, the highest of all God's creatures, are

filled with holy awe before the Divine glory, how great must that glory be, and how easily may the church of God, which is sure of his protection, trample all danger and all fear under foot! He, whom angels praise, must impart to his people unassailable protection against all their enemies. The suffix in כלו refers back to the temple,—its all, all that is in it, all who are there. כלו never occurs without something preceding to which the suffix refers. Thus כבוד, which is to be considered as a cry "Glory!" has its commentary in the "holy, holy, holy is the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," of the seraphim in Isaiah, where the holiness refers not specially to moral excellence, but also to the infinite superiority of God to all created beings. Compare what has been said on Psalm xxii. 3.

Several expositors have endeavoured to exhibit a regular progression of thought in the description of the thunder-storm: first, the storm is seen in the *sky*, (ver. 3, 4) then it attacks the *hills*, (5, 6) and, last of all, its influence is felt in the *plains*, (8.) But this progression is altogether forced. Verse 4th contains a description of the voice of the Lord, which is altogether general; it is impossible to see, according to this view, in what way verse 7th is brought in; and in verse 8th it is not the *plains* that are mentioned, but the *wilderness* with its frequently lofty hills.

There follows now, in verses 10 and 11, the application: If God is the God of glory, his people need be afraid of nothing.

Ver. 10. *The Lord sat at the deluge, and therefore the Lord sits as king for ever.* As the Lord on one occasion manifested himself at the deluge as King and Judge, in the *destruction* which he prepared for the ungodly, and the deliverance which he imparted to those who feared him, therefore will he also—this confidence the Psalmist had acquired from the majestic sight which he had seen with the eyes of his mind, and from the "glory!" of the sons of God, whose voices had penetrated the very depths of his soul—throughout all eternity manifest himself as king and judge in the deliverance of his people, and in the destruction of all his and their enemies. *Sitting* is the position peculiar to a king and judge: comp. Jo. iv. 12; Rev. xviii. 7; see also Ges. Thes. It derives its immediate application from the second clause: "as king" belongs in reality to the first. That the ל in למבול has reference to *time*, at the deluge—compare

on this usage, Ew. Sm. Gr. 527; Ges. Thes. 730; the ל is, in such cases, as it is always, the particle of proximity—appears from the corresponding לעולם, in which the usage of ל seems to have given rise to its usage in למבול. The article points to a particular flood, and directs attention manifestly to the deluge,—an event which would occur all the more suitably to the mind of the Psalmist, that the Lord had, on that occasion, manifested his glory in a tempest. This is evident, in as much as מבול is used only of the deluge in Gen. vi. 17; vii. 6, 7, &c., and in as much as it is obvious that, at the time when the Pentateuch was composed, the term had ceased to be a common noun. The fut. with the V. conv. וישב, intimates that what is to come will be similar to what has already taken place.—Other translations are to be rejected, such as: the Lord sits on the floods, he directs the inundations which follow a thunder-storm, and guides them, or, he is enthroned *above* the floods of the sky. But, in addition to the preterite and the מבל, it may be urged against these, that at the conclusion of the Psalm, where an application is the only thing that is suitable, an unsuitable element is brought in.

Ver. 11. *The Lord will give strength to his people, the Lord will bless his people with peace.* The second clause points to the beginning and end of the Mosaic blessing: "May the Lord bless thee—and give thee peace." Jo. Arnd remarks on the first clause: "This is glorious consolation against the contempt and persecutions of poor Christians, the little flock, which has no outward protection, no outward strength in the world. But the Holy Ghost imparts consolation, and says, the world shall not give strength and power to the church, but the Lord; as king Jehosaphet comforted himself when he said, 'With them is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord of Hosts,' and John, 'He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.'"

PSALM XXX.

This Psalm, which consists in all of twelve verses, may be naturally divided into two parts—an *introduction* of five, and a *main body* of seven verses. In the *introduction,* the Psalmist takes a rapid survey of the subject of his poem: the Lord has graciously delivered him out of great danger,—danger which threatened him with *entire destruction,* v. 1—3; then, intimat-

ing that he sings for the whole church, he exhorts all the pious to praise the glory of God, his forgiving mercy, which had been manifested to him on this occasion, ver. 4 and 5. In the sequel he first gives an account of his *misfortune:* prosperity had produced in him pride and false confidence: out of this sinful state he had been roused by a judgment which God had permitted to befal him, v. 7. He next tells us what the prayer was which he had offered up to God, from the depths of that misery into which he had been sunk in punishment of his pride, v. 8—10; narrates the deliverance which, in answer to this prayer, had been vouchsafed to him, v. 11; and concludes with a promise of eternal gratitude for the deliverance thus wrought out, v. 12.

The *occasion* for which the Psalm was written is announced in the title: a Psalm, a song of the dedication of the house of David. We cannot, with De Wette, (Intro. p. 32), consider these words as intimating the *tune,*—as if the Psalm were to be sung to a tune which was generally sung at the dedication of houses. The words do not admit this interpretation; a song of the dedication of a house cannot possibly be a song like the song of the dedication of a house; the contents possess nothing at all similar to what would be the contents of a poem composed for such an occasion; every attempt has failed to prove that the titles ever indicate the tune to which the Psalms are to be sung, and this idea has simply originated in the difficulty felt in endeavouring to give a satisfactory explanation. In like manner we must reject the explanation given by Calvin, Grotius, and others, that the house is the palace of David, and that the Psalm was composed when David consecrated his house a second time, by a religious service, after it had been polluted by Absalom. The term חנכה is never used except as applicable to the consecration of a *new* building, and the contents of the Psalm do not at all accord with such an occasion. The house clearly is the house of God, the temple. And the title indicates that the Psalm was sung at the dedication by David of the site of the future temple, as recorded in 2 Sam. xxiv. and 1 Chron. xxv. The object of the Psalm is very correctly given by Venema: "That the remembrance might be perpetuated to all posterity of the occasion on which the site of the temple to be erected by Solomon was selected, and the temple itself consecrated by a sign from heaven."

Against this view nothing of any consequence can be urged,

except that the dedication of the future site of the temple, by the erection of an altar, can scarcely be called the dedication of a house. But really one does not see why it may not. That a house of God may be where there are no splendid buildings, but only a simple altar, is evident from Gen. xxviii. 22, and that the house of the Lord was really here present, is unquestionably evident from 1 Chron. xxi. 26: "And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord, and he answered him from heaven by fire, upon the altar of burnt-offering." The place was, in the fullest sense of the word, even in David's time, a *sanctuary*, yea *the sanctuary*, and therefore *the house* of God, and in reality there was nothing added to its dignity by Solomon. The Lord had pointed it out as his house, he had granted David the forgiveness of his sin in the very act of marking it out, he had at its dedication consecrated it by fire from heaven. David recognised in this altar the sanctuary of the Lord; he not only sacrificed there once, but he used it ever afterwards as a place of sacrifice. Besides all this, we have one passage in which it is expressly said that David gave to that place the name of *the house of the Lord*,—an appellation which he would regard as all the more appropriate from the circumstance that he foresaw that the form would very soon be superadded to the reality, in that edifice which he knew would be completed by his son, and in the preparation for which he henceforth himself engaged with so much alacrity, compare 1 Chron. xxii. 2, &c. The passage is 1 Chron. xxii. 1: "And David said this is the house of the Lord, and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel."

On the other hand, and in favour of this interpretation, we have the contents of the Psalm, in exact agreement with 2 Sam. xxiv. and 1 Chron. xxi. First, there is an agreement in reference to *David's sin*. Here, as there, it was no outward sin on the part of David that brought down the Divine judgment; it was such a sin as lay concealed within the recesses of the heart. His sin, here as there, was *pride*, which led him to consider what had been given him by the Lord, as acquired by his own might, and as a lasting possession. Here David expressly tells us this, in the 7th verse, where his sin is represented as consisting in his saying, in his prosperity, "I shall never be moved." Buddæus, who remarks on the numbering of the people, "the thing itself shows that David in the whole matter was actuated by pride and vainglory," takes a correct view of the matter in opposition to that

taken by J. D. Michaelis, who cannot understand what a sin is, which lies wholly within the heart, and by others who follow him, such as Keil, on Chronicles, p. 351, who maintains that the numbering of the people was for *military* purposes, was like an enrolment for service, and proceeded from that love of conquest which David had acquired in his old age, in consequence of having brought so many battles to a successful termination. It is expressly said in 2 Sam. xxiv. 2, that David's design was "to take the number of the people," and the remark of Joab in ver. 3 renders it evident that David, in so doing, was seeking to gratify his pride and vain-glory much in the same way that an avaricious man gratifies his avarice by counting his gold. It is clearly evident from Ex. xxx. 12, that the numbering of the people, which is in itself an action entirely innocent, and in some circumstances absolutely necessary, may very easily become a sin through pride. The punishment also shows that the essence of the sin was pride: quia David multitudine populi superbire voluit, ideo Deus eum diminutione populi punivit. Thenius in his remarks on the passage, has shown clearly, that it is only by a false interpretation that 2 Sam. xxiv. 5, can be made to favour the view taken by J. D. Michaelis.—Further, the calamity spoken of is one which came upon the Psalmist after a long season of peace and prosperity, ver. 6, 7. This was the case at the numbering of the people. The pride, which prompted David to that act, had been induced by prosperity. —The calamity referred to in the Psalm was *very severe*, but it was of *short duration:* the pain was quickly and suddenly changed into joy; compare ver. 2, ver. 11, and especially ver. 5: "weeping lasts for an evening, and in the morning there is joy." Such was exactly the case at the numbering of the people. The calamity, which so rent the heart of David that, in a state in which it might be said that he was rather dead than alive, he besought the Lord to make an end of it, at the expense of *his own life*, came suddenly to a close, after it lasted less than one entire day. The calamity, according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, "lasted from morning till the time of *meeting*." That by this, we are to understand, "the evening religious assembly," *i. e.* "till the time of the evening sacrifice," (1 Kings xviii. 36, comp. with ver. 29; 2 Kings xvi. 15,) is clear from the context. Of the two religious assemblies of the day, the first is excluded by the expression, "from the morning." The usual interpreta-

tion, "till the time appointed," is inadmissible, for the phrase must mean some part of the day, standing in opposition to the morning, and, from the succeeding context, it is evident that the judgment did *not* last till the time appointed by God, but was *shortened* in consequence of David's repentance.—The punishment, according to ver. 7 of our Psalm, was such a one as broke the *power of the kingdom*. This was the case at the numbering of the people. The *enemy*, the usual instrument of Divine judgments in the Psalms, especially in those that were inflicted on David, comes into notice here only as *rejoicing* over the calamity of the Psalmist—an expression which indicates simply his presence; and this is in accordance with 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, where, among the three evils submitted to David's choice, we find this, "that he was to flee three months before his enemies while they pursued him."—Here, as there, the *deliverance* followed in immediate connection with the *prayer* of David.—Verse 11, "thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness," may be compared with 1 Chron. xxi. 16, "then David and the elders of Israel who were clothed in sackcloth fell upon their faces." Lastly, verse 4th indicates, in accordance with our view of the title, that the Psalm was prepared for the purpose of being used in public worship.

Our Psalm affords a very remarkable proof of the correctness and originality of the Titles. The circumstances above adverted to, are so very far from being obvious, that the title could not possibly have been framed from laying them alongside of each other.

The idea, arbitrarily entertained by Hitzig, that the Psalm was composed by Jeremiah, is refuted by the obvious allusions to it in the song of Hezekiah, as recorded in the 38th chapter of Isaiah: compare ver. 18 and 19 of that chapter, with the 9th verse of this Psalm.

The forgiving mercy of God towards his own people is manifestly pointed out in ver. 5 as the *kernel* of the Psalm. It is very remarkable, that, previous to the laying of the material foundation of the temple, this should have been pointed out by God himself, as the spiritual basis on which the temple was to rest. David comes forth in this Psalm, as the interpreter of this announcement,—an announcement implied in the procedure adopted on the occasion by God.

Ver. 1. *I will exalt thee, O Lord, for thou hast exalted me, and*

hast not permitted my foes to rejoice over me. Muis: "*I will praise thee,* is followed in the second clause by the *ground,* why he desires to praise God; and he expands this in the two following verses, for the purpose of showing how great is his obligation to praise him." The three verses are bound together as one whole, by the thrice repeated address to God. The first clause, "I will *exalt* thee," stands in manifest reference to the second, "because thou hast *exalted* me." Calvin: "because he was, as it were, exalted from the grave to the life-giving air, he promises that he will exalt the name of God. For as God exalts on high by his hand when we are sunk in the deep, so it is, on the other hand, our duty to exalt his praise with heart and lips." The term דָּלָה, properly to *draw water,* is explained by the representation here given of the calamity under the figure of a *deep well,* into which the Psalmist had sunk. That we are to pay no regard to the literal rendering is manifest from the 3d verse, "thou hast brought up my soul from the grave," and from verse 2d, where "thou hast drawn me up," corresponds to "thou hast healed me." The שָׂמַח with the לְ, indicates, according to the connection, *malicious pleasure.* It signifies properly to rejoice at any one, so that the joy pertains to him, or stands in reference to him. David's enemies, like those of every pious king, were the numerous enemies of the Lord,—*the ungodly:* compare 2 Sam. xii. 14; "because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to *the enemies of the Lord* to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto them shall surely die." As these had hitherto contemplated with envy the previous manifestations of the grace of God towards him, so now they derived a peculiar gratification from the calamity with which he had been visited. They hoped that he would now be utterly destroyed—a consummation which they had in vain looked for in the days of Absalom. This hope was frustrated, when they saw that God had forgiven the infirmity of his repentant servant, and that he did not give him over to the punishment of the ungodly.

Ver. 2. *O Lord, my God, I cry to God, and thou didst heal me.* Every severe suffering may be compared to a sickness, and the Lord, who removes it, to a physician. Compare Isaiah vi. 10; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. "To heal" here is explained by the "helping" of ver. 10, and the "gladdening" of ver. 11. To conclude from the expression "thou didst heal me," that David had been literally ill of a bodily disease, would be as absurd as to con-

clude from the expression "thou hast drawn me out," of the first verse, that he had fallen into a well.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from hell, thou hast brought me alive from among those who go down to the pit.* David had been brought near *death*, through grief, on account of the sufferings in which his criminal conduct had involved his people: compare on Psalm vi. 6, 7. He was, as it were, dead, though still literally alive; compare 2 Cor. i. 10. Calvin: "He thought that he could not otherwise adequately describe the greatness of the favour of God, than by comparing the darkness of that time to that of the grave and the pit." In reference to יוֹרְדֵי בוֹר, compare on Psalm xxviii. 1. "From those," is "taking me out of the number of those." The marginal reading מֵיָרְדִי, "from my going down," that is, "so that I may not go down," is to be decidedly rejected. For the infinitive of ירד is always רֶדֶת, (compare verse 9,) and the Psalmist represents himself in the first clause as one who had already sunk to Sheol. The Masorites made the change because they could not understand how the Psalmist reckoned himself among the dead.

After this short glance at the circumstances, there follows in the 4th and 5th verses the announcement of the kernel of the doctrine which they contain. This extends far beyond the range of individual and personal experience, and is of importance to the whole community of believers. These are exhorted to concur in the praise of the Psalmist for the deliverance vouchsafed to him, because it gloriously illustrates the nature of God.

Ver. 4. *Sing to the Lord ye saints of his, and praise his holy memorial.* The *memorial* of the Lord is what presents itself to the mind when we think of him,—therefore everything by which he makes known his nature,—his historically manifested properties,—his character as exhibited in his acts. Were he the *hidden God*, he would have no name and no memorial. The fundamental passage is Ex. iii. 15: "this, viz. Jehovah, the God of your fathers, is my name for ever, and my memorial unto all generations,"—that is, I will always from this time make myself known as possessed of this property, so that it shall not be possible for men to name me except by it, or to think of me except according to it. Compare Isaiah xxvi. 8; Psalm cxxxv. 13; xcvii. 12; Hosea xii. 6. The addition קָדְשׁוֹ presents us with the *conte ·s*

of the memorial. The *holiness* of God is, in this passage also, his infinite elevation above all created being: compare on Psalm xxii. 3. This the Lord manifests in the most glorious manner, in his "being compassionate, gracious, and merciful." Compare Hos. xi. 9, where, in like manner, the forbearance and the grace of God are represented as the expression of his *holiness*. What is mentioned here in two words as *the holy memorial* of God, is set before us in a more expanded form in the 5th verse. The historical character of God, as the holy one, rich in forgiveness, and infinitely elevated above all human passion, had been manifested in the experience of David. This furnished an opportunity for calling upon the whole church to praise him in this aspect. Whatever the Lord does in the first instance to one individual, belongs at all times to the whole church: and the people of God ought joyfully to avail themselves of every such opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Ver. 5. *For his anger endureth but a moment, his favour bringeth life, weeping in the evening remaineth over the night, and in the morning there is joy.* This verse gives the basis of the exhortation to praise the Lord, and especially his holiness. That באפו is not to be translated, "*during* his anger," but, "through his anger," is obvious from the opposite term, "in his favour;" compare the ברצונך in verse 7. The literal rendering is: "Because a moment (is) through his anger, life through his favour:" the import is: "because through his anger there comes only one sorrowful moment, and then there comes again, as it were, life through his favour." The "moment" is defined by the connection and the parallelism to be a *sorrowful* one. The *life* is to be explained neither as *bare* life, nor simpliciter as *deliverance*. It includes both,—life in the proper sense and deliverance: compare on Ps. xvii. 11. It is explained on the one hand, by ver. 3, where the Psalmist says, that the Lord had brought him back to life from the death into which he had as good as fallen, and by the "my blood," in ver. 9th, and on the other hand by verse 11 and by the parallel term *joy*. God delivers his people from apparent death, and bestows upon them deliverance. Mere life could not be called life, it would only be death in disguise.—From attempting to bring out a perfectly exact parallelism, and from not at the same time observing, that the רגע is limited by the connection to be a moment of *sorrow*,

denoting suitably the opposite of חיים, critics have been led into two false expositions. Several, like the Septuagint and Hitzig, go wrong on the רגע: "*sudden* death is the effect of his anger." Most, however, display their ingenuity on חיים. It is made to denote *the whole of life:* "his anger lasts for *one moment*, his favour, on the other hand, diffuses happiness among his people throughout their *whole lifetime*." But then, חיים never occurs as equivalent to "all the days of life;" it is rather used throughout the Psalms in opposition to death, in the full sense of that term: compare for example xvi. 11, xxxiv. 12, xxxvi. 9. Even in the second clause, there is nothing said of the long continuance of the deliverance, of which the Psalmist could as yet know nothing, but only of the short duration of the suffering and of the sudden transition to joy. The same observation may be applied to ver. 2 and 11.—In the second half of the verse, WEEPING is personified and represented by the figure of a wanderer, who leaves in the morning the lodging into which he had entered the preceding evening. After him another guest arrives, viz. JOY. The ילין can refer only to the first clause: in the second the substantive verb must be supplied.—The contents of the verse are applicable to those only who are exhorted in the 4th verse to praise the glory of God therein represented, which forms the ground of their joyful hope and of their patience in affliction, viz. the pious. The Divine judgments are *annihilating* in their character to the *ungodly:* in their case joy never follows weeping.

There follows after the introduction a more full and distinct description, on the one hand, of the distress which David by his own sin had brought upon himself, and, on the other, of the grace of God which had wrought out his deliverance.

Ver. 6. *And I said in my security, I shall never be moved.* Calvin: "an effeminate indolence had stolen over his spirit, so that he had no enjoyment in prayer, and no sense of his dependance upon Divine grace, but trusted too much to frail transitory prosperity." The "speaking" here is the speaking of the *heart.* There is no necessity arising from this passage for supposing that there is another form of the noun שלו, instead of the usual one, שלוה: compare on the dropping of the feminine termination before the suffixes, Hitzig on Hos. xiii. 2. The phrase itself, "in my security," may be understood either as equivalent

to "when I was prosperous" (Luther,) or as indicating *that carnal security of the soul* which is brought on by worldly prosperity, as in Prov. i. 32, "the prosperity of fools shall destroy them," and the adj. in Ex. xxiii. 42. In favour of this last interpretation it may be urged, that the words, except when considered in this view, are not sufficiently explicit. It is only from the sense in which they are spoken that they have a sinful character. Considered in themselves, they may be taken as an expression of *living faith.*—The deepest insight into the dangers of prosperity, and the necessity which thence arises for affliction, had previously been exhibited in the *law:* compare for example Deut. xxxii. 15, "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation:" but especially Deut. viii. 11—18, where almost every word agrees exactly with the case before us: "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and thine heart be lifted up, and thou say in thine heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth: but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for he it is that giveth thee power to get wealth." Besides Israel (compare Hos. xiii. 16, "according to their pasture so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me,") and David, we have in the Old Testament a remarkable example of the dangers of prosperity in the case of Hezekiah, who stood so nobly when in adversity. These dangers are not only incident to worldly prosperity, but are also to be dreaded in a season of spiritual enjoyment. J. Arnd says: "Behold! we have here a very affecting warning in the example of beloved David, which should teach us to fear God during our days of prosperity, and never to be confident, or to put our dependance on earthly things. How did the prophets preach against the mighty kings and nations in their prophecies against Babylon and others! All those mighty nations, cities, and kings who depended on their own might and riches, have been broken and laid waste, and levelled with the ground; while, on the other hand, all who acted humbly, feared God, and cherished a sense of dependence on his grace, have been maintained and shall continue to exist for ever. The sentence also is to be understood in a spiritual sense: many a one is so strong in faith, so spiritually minded, so joyful, so full of confidence, that he bids defiance

to the devil and the world, and says with David, 'I will not fear though hundreds of thousands were encamped against me.' But when our beloved God tries us a little, when he withdraws from us his grace, O then all is over with us, and we are ready to sink into hell and to give up all for lost. This God does that we may become acquainted with our own weakness, and may know that we are entirely dependent on Divine grace." The Berleb. Bib.: "A change is necessary, in order that the soul may be brought to know that its firmness is entirely dependent on the strength which God has imparted. If its beautiful day had no evening, if its sun were never darkened, the soul would infallibly ascribe all to its own power and care. But as soon as God withdraws his sensible co-operation, evening and darkness destroy its beautiful day: and it then knows that every thing comes from this source and sun, and that every thing proceeds from the will of God, and through the working of his grace, without any merit on our own part at all."

Ver. 7. *O Lord, through thy mercy thou hadst imparted strength to my mountain, thou didst hide thy face and I was confounded.* David complains of his folly, in that it was necessary for him to learn by misfortune that his prosperity was nothing else than a gift of Divine grace, the continuance of which did not depend on any power in its possessor, but on its heavenly author. The verse may be thus paraphrased: "I have learned by painful experience that the power of my kingdom had its root in thy favour, for, when thou didst withdraw thy grace, I was in a miserable condition, and felt myself to be irretrievably lost." It is of importance to compare the *history* here. How speedily were all the foolish ideas, which led David to number the people, dissipated, when the Divine judgments broke in upon him! העמיד, with the accusative of the thing, and the dative of the person, is "to impart any thing to any one:" compare 2 Chron. xxxiii. 8, "The land which I have appointed for your fathers:" —in the parallel passage 2 Kings xxi. 8, it is נתן, "gave." The "mountain" is in general a striking emblem of dominion. But there was in the case before us a particular reason why the Psalmist selected this figure. A mountain was the centre, and therefore the natural symbol of David's kingdom: compare 2 Sam. v. 9, "and David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David." On the top of the high and steep eminence, in the ἄνω πόλις, the royal city was situated, (Neh. iii. 25), which was

termed the upper king's house. Its situation must have rendered it a place of great security. This is evident from the contemptuous language used by the Jebusites when David was endeavouring to obtain possession of it. They insinuated that the blind and the lame were sufficient to defend it. Micah iv. 8 is exactly parallel to our passage. The prophet employs the hill of the daughter of Zion, and specially the tower of the city built upon it, as an emblem of the dominion of the seed of David; compare Christol. P. III. p. 273. Those passages are analogous, in which the hill of Sion appears as the symbol of the kingdom of God, on account of the sanctuary erected upon it: Is. ii. 3, Ps. lxviii. 17, &c. Hence the expression, "thou hast imparted strength to my mountain," is, "thou hast imparted strength to my kingdom:" compare 2 Sam. v. 12, "And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had *exalted his kingdom.*" Those expositions are to be rejected in which the mountain is considered as symbolical either of security, or of dignity and greatness. Neither security nor dignity can have strength imparted to them. According to our exposition, the passage stands in remarkable agreement with the *history.* The Divine judgment, which followed the numbering of the people, destroyed, to a great extent, the strength of the kingdom.

There follows now (v. 8—10) the prayer which David, after he had been brought to a right state of mind, offered up to God as the fruit of the Divine chastisement. Calvin: "David, who had hitherto been sound asleep, is suddenly alarmed, and begins to cry to God. For as iron, when it has become rusty through long rest, cannot again be made use of till it has passed anew through the fire, and been struck again with the hammer, so, when carnal confidence has obtained the mastery, it is impossible for any man to address himself in right earnest to prayer, until he has been struck by the cross, and made fit for the work."

Ver. 8. *To thee, O Lord, I cried, and I supplicated the Lord for his grace.* Several expositors consider this verse as expressive of future time, and consequently read it with marks of quotation, as if it formed part of the prayer. This is the view taken by Luther: "I will call upon thee, O Lord, I will supplicate the Lord." But, in opposition to this, it may be urged, that, in the second clause, God is not addressed, but is spoken of. Hence it is better to interpret the future, as arising from the living realisation of the past.

Ver. 9. "*What profit is there to thee in my blood, that I should go down to the grave? Will dust praise thee, will it make known thy truth?*" The two first questions (literally, "what gain is there in my blood? What gain hast thou if thou spill my blood, if thou suffer me to die, or in my going down to the grave,") are answered in the two which follow. God would have *very little* profit. He would be deprived of the praise of the Psalmist, who, in the midst of all his weakness, had continued to be his servant, and whose praise consequently had been pleasant to him: compare the parallel passage, Ps. vi. 5. The אמת is neither "grace," nor "faithfulness," nor "friendship," but, as always, "truth." It is that attribute of God which the Psalmist will praise, if God does not give him over to death: compare the song of Hezekiah xxxviii. 19, "The living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day, the father to the children shall make known thy *truth;*" and ver. 18: "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the pit cannot make known thy *truth.*" God would be chargeable with untruth, were he to give over his own people to irremediable destruction, after having declared in his word his readiness to forgive their infirmities on their sincere repentance.—1 Chron. ii. 14—17 shows how exactly these words suit the situation to which we suppose them to refer. David had made an offer of his own life, for the deliverance of his people, to the angel with the drawn sword, whom he beheld with eyes which had been opened by a sense of his guilt. Even this offer shows that he looked upon himself as rather dead than alive. The sufferings of his people, of which he himself had been the cause, pierced his heart so severely, that he believed he must have died had they been prolonged.

Ver. 10. "*Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me, Lord be my helper.*"

David, after repeating his prayer, tells us that he had been *heard.* Ver. 11. *Thou turnedst for me my mourning into dancing, thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness.* שק is a hair garment, which mourners put on: it was, as it were, the robe of *penitence,* in which they were led through suffering to self-examination, and through it to humiliation under the mighty hand of God, to an acknowledgment of their sin, and to penitent prayer for forgiveness.

The conclusion consists of promises of *thanks.*

Ver. 12. *In order that glory may praise thee, and not be silent; O Lord, my God, I will praise thee for ever.* Several translators give: "for this reason," &c. But למען, when joined to verbs, never signifies, "for this reason," but always, "in order that:" and this signification, as Calvin saw, is here as suitable as any other. As David, in ver. 9, had grounded his prayer for deliverance on the plea, that otherwise he would not have it in his power to praise God, so now he brings in the praise of God as the object of the deliverance which had been really wrought out for him. And what a motive was there in this for David not to become weary in praising God! The "glory" indicates how highly God esteemed the praises of the Psalmist. He is made after the image of God, there is something divine in him: compare at Ps. vii. 5; xvi. 9. The expression, "In order that glory may praise thee," is, "in order that my soul may praise thee, which is glory, or whose praise is pleasant to thee, because it is glory." The suffix never occurs, and therefore its omission is of no consequence. The reference to the Psalmist, that the glory which is to praise God belongs to him, is drawn from the context. The "for ever," indicates that the Psalmist will set no limits to the praise of God. In reality, it corresponds to "all the days of our life," of Hezekiah, in the 20th verse.

PSALM XXXI.

After the Psalmist has shortly expressed his *prayer,* and indicated the *basis* on which it rests in the introduction (ver. 1), he brings forward the *latter* of these very prominently in the *first division* (v. 2—8): the Lord *may, must,* and *will* help him in his trouble, because he is his God. With confidence thus acquired from the consideration of the general relationship of God towards him, he proceeds in *the second division* (v. 9—18) more immediately to the trouble itself which he *describes* at length in *the first half* of this part (v. 9—13), and then in *the second half* (v. 14—18) he brings it to God. In *the third division* (v. 19—21) the Psalmist obtains from God the heartfelt assurance of help, and extols loudly the goodness of God towards his own people. *A conclusion* (ver. 22) sums up in a few words the personal experience of the Psalmist; and an *appendix* (ver. 23, 24) unfolds the lesson which the church ought to learn from this narrative:

—all the pious should be led thereby to love God, and confidently to trust in him in the time of trouble; for, as the example of the Psalmist shows, he will not fail to manifest himself as faithful to his people.

This Psalm also is distinguished by an artificial arrangement. The main body is marked by the numbers 3. 7. and 10, and is completed in two decades, if we reckon together the three verses of the third, and the seven of the first part, which are intimately related to each other:—in the first we have confidence *anticipating* an answer, and in the third, *referring* to the inward response of God. The second decade is divided into two parts of five verses each. If we add the conclusion and the introduction, it appears that the Psalm is an alphabetical one in point of numbers. There is also an evident attempt at alphabetical arrangement as regards the first letters of the verses in the paragraph from ver. 8—12. If we add the *application*, the verses amount to 24,—the doubled twelve,—the signature of the people of the covenant.

Several abortive attempts have been made to find out a *particular historical occasion* for the Psalm. It represents, as Coccceius has well remarked, the perpetual conflict which believers and the church have to maintain in this world, and the deliverance and victory by which that conflict is sure to be followed. The Psalmist does not speak in his own name, but in the name of every righteous man, who finds himself engaged in severe warfare. The want of all special historical reference may be urged in favour of this view. Then the language of the Psalm is exceedingly simple, while in those called forth by individual suffering, the language is more or less involved. In like manner, there is the fact, that not a few expressions in this Psalm are obvious references to other Psalms which proceeded from a heart in a state of great emotion. Last of all, there is the alphabetical arrangement. All alphabetical Psalms have a general character.

That Jeremiah found the Psalm suitable to his circumstances, and drew consolation from it, is evident, besides other facts, from chap. xx. 10, where we find the very peculiar language of the first half of the 13th verse repeated word for word. Modern expositors, entirely misunderstanding the relation subsisting between Jeremiah and the more ancient sacred writings, and particularly the Psalms, have, from the simple fact of the above

agreement, drawn the conclusion that he was the author of the Psalm. The conclusion is just as valid as would be the inference that it had been composed by our Saviour, because he made use of the language of the fifth verse on the cross. The more general reasons, such as those drawn from the sameness in point of sense, the connection between lamentation and hope, &c., do not lead to Jeremiah any more than to any other believer under the old Testament dispensation. There is, moreover, not the shadow of a reason for setting aside the superscription, which expressly announces the Psalm to have been David's.

First, the Introduction in ver. 1. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, let me never be ashamed, deliver me in thy righteousness.* The Psalmist prays for something which God must grant. His prayer rises on the firm foundation of *his own faith*, which God will never put to shame, and *of God's righteousness*, which renders it impossible that the lots of the righteous and the wicked should ever be interchanged. On "let me never be ashamed," the Berleb. Bible correctly remarks: "which would be the case, wert thou not to fulfil my desire and prayer:" and Venema: "he shows that he feels himself to be in such a situation that he must either be immediately delivered, or put to shame for ever." When to be put to shame *now* is the same thing as to be put to shame *for ever*, matters have come to the very last extremity: compare ver. 9—13, particularly the words, "they devised to take away my *life*," with "deliver me *speedily*," of ver. 2. Now the servants of God, notwithstanding all their weaknesses, are never put to shame *for ever*. God may, yea must visit his people with transitory suffering, but he cannot be God, and give them over to *destruction*. This belongs only to the wicked, but not to those who put their trust in God. It is utterly impossible to substitute "goodness" for "righteousness." The only question is, whether the prominent idea intended here to be conveyed is faithfulness in fulfilling promises, or justice in dispensing to each one according to his works. In favour of the latter view, we have the mention made of the *righteous* in ver. 18, of *them that fear God* in ver. 19, of *those who trust in God*, ver. 6, as the objects of the Divine assistance, and the expression in the verse before us, *in thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.* The righteousness of God demands that he should not give over to destruction (as is the case with the impious contemners of his grace) *those who trust in him*—it being of course understood that it is a *real*,

heartfelt trust that is meant, such a trust as springs from a *pure conscience:* compare at Ps. xviii. 1.; Ps. xxvi.

The first division is from ver. 2 to ver. 8. The Psalmist utters the prayer to God for deliverance, grounds it upon the inward relation in which he stands to God, and expresses his assurance of being heard.

Ver. 2. *Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me speedily; be a strong rock to me, and a fortress to help me.* Of the two elements contained in the Introduction—the Prayer and its Basis, —we have the first here, and the second in ver. 3. Jo. Arnd: "O God, thou hearest what is uttered in a very low voice, yea, thou hearest even my sighs! Ah! keep not at such a distance from me! I have no material defence, no place of strength and safety; be thou my castle and stronghold. Here we learn how the children of God ought to speak to their beloved father, namely, as friend to friend, or as a child to his father: ah! my beloved father, bow down thine ear to me. See, this is what faith, what child-like love and confidence does! It embraces the Lord, and falls, as it were, upon his neck! O Lord, thou knowest, and thou alone art acquainted with my trouble: to thee alone will I complain, and speak, as it were, secretly into thy ear." It belongs to fervent prayer to realize the presence of God in the most lively manner, so that, in the prayers of the godly, under the Old Testament dispensation, even before the incarnation of the Word, God took, as it were, flesh and blood. Hence it is that, in the Psalms, we find the strongest possible traces of what has been termed anthropomorphisms and anthropopathies. The non-existence of the anthropomorphisms of feeling is just as objectionable, yea more so than the existence of the anthropomorphisms of belief, which are met at the threshold of the Old Testament by the law forbidding images—a law which is based on the absolute *spirituality* of God. Aversion to the anthropomorphisms of feeling, or inability to make use of them in a way consistent with inward truth, is the result of practical atheism. "A strong rock and a fortress" is literally a rock of security, and a house of a mountain-top:" compare Ps. xviii. 3.

Ver. 3. *For thou art my rock and my fortress, and for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me and guide me.* The Psalmist had, in the preceding verse, prayed to God that he *would be* his rock and fortress, and he now grounds this prayer on the fact that the Lord *is* in reality his rock and fortress, because he *knew* him as

such, by the faith which God never *puts to shame*. God must in this particular case necessarily help him, because he stands towards him in the general relation of a helper. Hence we see what ground Koester has for maintaining that the "for" is illogical, and for drawing from this his conclusion that the Psalm is a compilation. The "for" refers to both clauses of the verse. Even in the second clause, the peculiarity to which the Psalmist refers, is led back to his trouble. To hold clearly and firmly by this, is one of the highest and most difficult attainments of grace enjoyed by sufferers.—The expression "for thy name's sake," is equivalent to "for the sake of thy historically manifested glory," especially "thy righteousness" of ver. 1: compare at Ps. xxiii. 3. The words תנחני and תנהלני (compare on the meaning of נהל, Ps. xxii. 2,) are to be considered as expressive, not of *prayer*, (Luther: "Wilt thou not lead and guide me,") but of *hope*. This is evident from the connection of the verse with what precedes, and from what follows, when the Psalmist passes from *hope* to *confidence*. The prayer of the preceding verse, "that the Lord would deliver the Psalmist," has assigned to it as its basis, "that the Lord will deliver him for his name's sake."

Ver. 4. *Thou wilt lead me out of the net which they laid for me, for thou art my strength.* Ver. 5. *Into thine hand I commit my spirit, thou redeemest me, God of truth.* The preterite, פדיתה, is to be taken in the prophetic sense, as expressive of confident *hope*, in close resemblance to the preterites of the 7th and 8th verses. The basis of this confidence is pointed out in the reference to God as a God of truth:—"God of truth" corresponds to "my strength," in the preceding verse. That God is a God of truth affords security for deliverance, inasmuch as he has revealed himself in his Word as the righteous rewarder: so that he would not be *acting in accordance with truth*, were he not to help.—Our Lord uttered on the cross the words of the first half of the verse before us, and this circumstance led many of the old expositors to apply the whole Psalm directly to the Messiah. Huss repeated frequently on the way to the stake the words: "Into thine hands I commend my spirit, thou hast redeemed me, my Lord Jesus, God of truth."

Ver. 6. *I hate those who regard lying vanities, and I trust in the Lord.* The Psalmist had in the preceding verse rested his hope of deliverance in God—the God of truth. In the verse before us he expands this thought. He does not, like the un-

godly world, which he hates, put his trust in deceitful vanities, in idols, which cannot make good the assistance which they promise to their votaries, he places his trust in the Lord, the I AM, the God of truth, who performs what he promises; and therefore he is sure of deliverance. The emphasis does not lie on the *trust*, but on the *object* of the trust. Many expositors substitute שָׂנֵאתָ, "thou hatest," instead of שָׂנֵאתִי: but the sense does not suit the connection, and Psalm xvi. 4, and xxvi. 5, are in favour of the first person. שמר, in the sense of, "to depend on any thing," occurs in Hos. iv. 10, and Zech. xi. 11. הבלים, "*vanities*," is applied to idols in Deut. xxxii. 21, in parallelism with לא אל: and also in Jonah ii. 9; Jer. x. 3, xv. 19. That it refers here immediately to idols, is evident from comparing Ps. xvi. 2—5. In reality, however, the remark of Calvin is perfectly corrrect; "All those vain hopes which we invent for ourselves, and which withdraw our trust from God, David calls vanities, and even vanities of nothingness or of lies, because they delude and deceive us, though they entertain for a long while with their mighty boastings." The הבלים stands in opposition to יהוה of the preceding verse—the I AM, the pure and absolute entity in opposition to the nonentity,—and the שוא, "the lie," is opposed to אמת, "the truth." They are in themselves nothing, and, on this account, they are *deceitful* to all those who place their hope in them. The ואני, on which many have stumbled, is to be explained by considering the words "I hate, &c." as equivalent to "Those whom I hate, &c." Jo. Arnd remarks: "The soul *remains* with that, on which it depends, on which it places its hope, where it seeks comfort and rest, with which it is united: is thy soul united with any earthly thing, has it conceived an affection for it, does it depend on it, woe to thy poor soul, it will remain where its hope is. Therefore look well to what it is that thy soul is depending on."

Ver. 7. *I will be glad, and rejoice in thy goodness, thou seest my trouble, thou knowest the necessity of my soul.* The sufferer sees, with the eye of faith, the deliverance, for which he hopes, already present,—(the prayer with which the paragraph begins is based on hope, and the hope passes on in the verse before us, to confidence,)—and exhorts himself, now that God had performed his part, to render him joyful thanks. The exposition of Michaelis and others, "let me give thanks"—"Give me, by delivering me, occasion to render thanks,"—is confuted by the

preterites.—The *seeing* is not without meaning. When God sees the misery of his people, he cannot but help them. The ידע with ב is used of a knowledge which co-exists with some strong affection; in this case, that of love centred upon its object: compare Job xxv. 15. The exposition of Luther, "thou knowest my soul in trouble," which has been again brought into notice by Stier, is negatived by passages such as Gen. xlii. 21, where צרת נפש clearly occurs, and Ps. xxv. 17.

Ver. 8. *And thou dost not give me over into the hand of my enemy, thou settest my feet in a large room.* "To shut up in the hand," is to give over into the power in such a way that there can be no deliverance. The phrase is made use of by David, 1 Sam. xxiii. 11. Compare xxvi. 8, xxiv. 19. On the second clause, compare Ps. xviii. 19.

There follows now the *second division*, (ver. 9—18), in which the Psalmist, in the spirit of heartfelt trust in the helping grace of God, to which, after much exertion, he had attained, proceeds *first*, to describe at length his trouble, (ver. 9, 13), and, *second*, to pray for deliverance, (14—18.)

Ver. 9. *Lord, be merciful unto me, for I am hard pressed, mine eye is decayed because of vexation, my soul and my body.* Compare Ps. vi. 7. We have already seen at this passage, and at Ps. x. 14, that כעס does not signify *grief*, but *vexation*, or *dejection*, especially that arising from the unrighteous conduct of enemies.

Ver. 10. *For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing, my strength is broken through my guilt, and my bones are consumed.* The expressions, "with grief," and "with sighing," are to be interpreted as pointing out the causes of the appearances described:—"My constant pain, my continual sighing wear me out before the time, end my life, shorten my years." כלה is "to waste away," "to tend towards dissolution." כשל is in many places "to stumble," "to sink from weakness:" compare, for example, Ps. cix. 24: it is applied here to sinking, broken strength. Many of the expositors are altogether at sea in their efforts to explain "through my guilt:" it was not the *guilt* of the Psalmist, say they, but the *wickedness* of his enemies, that had involved him in suffering, he appeals to the *justice* of God, (ver. 1), and represents himself as a man of *uprightness* and *piety*, who had led an *innocent* life. They therefore explain the term: "through my *suffering*." But עון is all

ways "guilt," and never "suffering," such as befalls an innocent man, and not once "punishment." The *wickedness* of enemies, and the *guilt* of the Psalmist, may very well co-exist as causes that have brought on his distress: the Lord, on account of his guilt, may have given power to the malice of his enemies to injure him: Neither are the *guilt* of the Psalmist and his own *righteousness* inconsistent with each other, he was a righteous man in regard to the prevailing direction of his life, but this was quite compatible with the existence of manifold sins of infirmity, which rendered it necessary that he should be purified by the cross. The righteousness of God may have brought on the Psalmist's suffering, but that need not prevent the Psalmist from looking to the same righteousness as the ground for which he hopes for deliverance. Sins of infirmity call for *punishment*, not *destruction;* and it is that this, which the Psalmist finds to be already near, may be averted, that he appeals to the righteousness of God. Finally, the Psalmist might be innocent in reference to his enemies, and might, nevertheless, he given over to suffering by God on account of his guilt. It is, moreover, altogether impossible for us to keep out of view the guilt as the cause of the suffering, inasmuch as, according to the view given in Scripture, every suffering is, and must be, a punishment, since God is just. To recognise in our sufferings a righteous retribution is the only sure foundation on which the hope of deliverance can be made to rest: he only who can say with the heart, "my strength is broken because of my *guilt*," will be able to utter with inward truth the prayer, "deliver me for thy *righteousness' sake*." The case of Job affords a remarkable illustration of this. His despair of a prosperous issue to his sufferings depended on this, and on this alone, that his failing to acknowledge his sinfulness rendered it impossible to bring his case into collision with the righteousness of God. The same point, which is merely hinted at here, occupies the foreground in other similar Psalms, as, for example, the 38th. The bones are mentioned as the seat of strength. Very severe pain penetrates the bones and the marrow, and renders the whole man thoroughly feeble.

Ver. 11. *On account of mine enemies I have become a reproach, and even to my neighbours very much, and an object of aversion to my acquaintances, those who see me in the street flee from me.* The Psalmist complains of the loss of his reputation, which, to a man who feels himself deserted by God, is altogether insuppor-

table, and even to one in fellowship with God, is very difficult to be borne. Calvin: "He says the multitude of his enemies have gained over the whole world to their side, and therefore in the face of his friends and acquaintances he has been overwhelmed with reproach; in these circumstances, public opinion furiously assaults our souls as with a mighty hurricane." Jo. Arnd: "It cannot be worse with us than when we are so overwhelmed with lies and slanders that we come to be publicly despised, so that people are ashamed of us and shun us, and it is reckoned disreputable to associate with us, and even our intimate friends forsake us: this was the case in a remarkable manner at the crucifixion of our Lord; his friends stood afar off, for had they come near they would have been recognised as connected with him. It is a piece of the curse, a portion of the poison, and one of the most murderous blows of the devil, so to slander a man that he is looked upon as an abomination and a curse." The ground work of this description is to be found in the painful trial which David experienced during the persecution of Saul. The מִן is casual: "on account of,"—"the reproach arises from my enemies." The Psalmist first says in general, "I have become a reproach," and then mentions particularly those whose reproach he felt peculiarly to be painful, "and (particularly I have become a reproach to my neighbours) very much,—to a great extent." *Those who see me in the street*, &c. Not only will no one associate with me under the same roof, or hold confiding intercourse with me, every one flees from me as soon as I am seen in the streets.

Ver. 12. *I am forgotten in the heart like a dead man, I have become like a broken vessel.* The מִלֵּב is properly *out of the heart.* On "a broken vessel," the Berleb. Bible remarks: "which is good for nothing, which can be made no use of, cannot be made whole again, for which no one cares, and the fragments of which are thrown away." That this last clause refers not only to the *contempt*, but also, in general, to the completely comfortless condition of the Psalmist, is evident from the "for" with which the next verse opens.

Ver. 13. *For I hear the slander of many, fear is on every side, when they take counsel together against me, they devise to take away my life.* The sufferer here *assigns the basis* of the clause, "I am like a broken vessel." The thought of the *slanderings* of the enemies is naturally followed by that of their *acts of perse-*

cution: "fear is on every side," &c. To know that they had it in their power to perpetrate these without hindrance, was the reason why their slanders were regarded. They withdrew public sympathy from their victim, by loading him with reproaches, that they might have it in their power to sacrifice him, undisturbed and unpunished. On the סוֹד יחד compare on Ps. ii. 2. The representation of the trouble here given points to the conclusion, that the enemies were in readiness to make a determined onset against the *life* of the sufferer. If this be the case, God, as was brought prominently forward in the first part, must, as sure as he is the Psalmist's God, put forth his helping hand without delay: *delay* is dangerous; not to help now, is the same thing as not to help at all.

Ver. 14. *And I trust in thee, O Lord, I say, "thou art my God."* Calvin, by the following remark, removes to the apparent contrast between the confidence in God expressed here, and the complaints uttered in the previous verses. "He was indeed sunk in the darkness of sorrow and in dreadful affliction, yet the hidden light of faith still glimmered inwardly in his heart; he sighed under his heavy load of trial, yet he still had strength left to call upon God." On "thou art my God," he remarks: "there is nothing more difficult, when we see our faith despised by the whole world, than to direct our language to God alone, and to rest on the testimony of our conscience that "he is our God."

Ver. 15. *My times are in thine hand, deliver me from the hands of my enemies and from my persecutors.* עתים never signifies *fate*, but always *times*. The Psalmist affirms that the times, with their suffering and joys (comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 30), are in the hand of God, and that it requires only a nod from him to transform the evil into good, while he rises on the wings of faith above the visible world, even after no such change appears any longer to be possible.

Ver. 16. *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, deliver me through thy goodness.* On the last clause, which refers to Num. vi. 25, compare at Ps. iv. 6. The words, "upon thy servant," contain the basis of the prayer. God cannot do otherwise than manifest himself as gracious to his servant.

Ver. 17. *Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call upon thee, may the wicked be put to shame, and be silent in sheol.* "For I call upon thee," corresponds to "in thee, O Lord, do I put my trust," at the beginning of the Psalm. The "calling"

comes into notice as the outward expression of the "trust." Jo. Arnd: "the beloved prophet puts God in remembrance of his promise that he will hear and help those who call upon him with heartfelt confidence. 'I call upon thee,' he says, 'therefore let me not be put to shame.' Whoever can hold fast by this hope, cannot be put to shame by God: his promises and even himself will sooner be put to shame." The contrast between the Psalmist, who calls upon God, and the *wicked*, shows, on the one hand, that not to call upon God is an infallible mark of the wicked, and, on the other hand, that calling upon God thrives only on the soil of a good heart. The wicked are not the enemies of the Psalmist, they only belong to them; they are not wicked because they are enemies, but enemies because they are wicked:—may I not be ashamed (and in me all the righteous), may those rather who deserve it be ashamed, the wicked, and among them, my enemies. The following verse renders it evident that "may they be silent," is, "may they be struck dumb," and that the expression represents the contrast to the blustering noise of the wicked. Jo. Arnd: "May death and sheol stop their mouth, so that they may not have it in their power to revile and slander any more." The לשאול, properly "*to* sheol," indicates that their silence belongs to sheol, that it originates from their abode in it—the noiseless kingdom of the dead.

Ver. 18. *May the lying lips be put to silence which speak recklessly against the righteous man in pride and contempt.* Compare verse 13. The lying lips are brought to silence by the destruction of the wicked slanderers.

There follows now *the third part*, the *hearing of the prayer*, (ver. 19—21.)

Ver. 19. *How great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them who fear thee, which thou manifestest to them that trust in thee, before the sons of men.* The Psalmist, after he had obtained inwardly the assurance of being heard, first praises in general (ver. 19, 20) the goodness of God towards his own people, and next represents (ver. 21) the personal experience which had given him occasion thus to praise God. In the first clause, the goodness of God, which had been enjoyed by the Psalmist in rich abundance on behalf of the Lord's people, appears under the emblem of a *treasure* which he has laid up for them. Those interpreters who cannot see their way through the abbreviated

comparison, the force of which undoubtedly is, "which in rich fulness, like a hoarded treasure, is present for those who are thine," are inclined to substitute "good things" instead of "goodness." But טוּב יהוה means always *the goodness* of the Lord (compare at Ps. xxvii. 13), and that this signification is to be retained here is obvious from the expression, Ps. xxxvi. 8, "how precious is thy love," חַסְדְּךָ. Jo. Arnd: "Oh! whoever heartily trusts in God with lively stedfast hope, possesses God, with all his treasures of grace, with all his goodness, and love, and friendship. God gives himself to those as their own, who give themselves to him and trust in him. Whoever gives to God his whole heart, receives in return from God his whole heart, with all its goodness and felicity."—Arnd expounds correctly, "before the sons of men": "so that every one, friend and foe, must say that it is a work of God. Thus were the faith and prayer of Hezekiah made known to the whole world, when the sun went back; thus was it also with the faith and prayer of Daniel and the three men in the fiery furnace. Who would have thought that God would have had such goodness among his secret treasures to manifest to his people! Such goodness has he laid up in his treasures for you and for me if we trust in him." Luther and others, in violation of the accents, translate: "who trust in thee before the people." But, in opposition to this view, there must be urged the reference, as noticed by Arnd, in which "before the sons of men" stands to צָפַנְתָּ. Besides, the expression, "to trust in God before the sons of men," never occurs, and indeed can scarcely occur, inasmuch as the trust in God is frequently made public only by the manifestation, which takes place, before the whole world, and especially before the *enemy*, of the grace of God toward his own people: comp. at Ps. xxiii. 5.

Ver. 20. *Thou hidest them in the secret of thy presence from every man's association, thou concealest them in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.* In the first clause, the regard of God for his people—his favour—appears as a place of resort, which he procures for them: compare "make thy face to shine upon thy servant," ver. 16. The term רָכָס, which occurs in no other passage, is from רָכַס, "to bind," and signifies "a bond," "a confederation:" compare, "while they took counsel together against me," ver. 13. "The slander of many," in that verse, corresponds to "the strife of tongues," in the verse before us.

The "pavilion," in which God conceals his people, is a *spiritual one*, and there is no need for supplying the ב. Arnd: "This our beloved God does secretly, so that no human eyes may or can see, and the ungodly do not know that a believer is, in God, and in the presence of God, so well protected, that no reproach or contempt, and no quarelsome tongues can do him any harm." Psalm xxvii. 5 is parallel.

Ver. 21. *Praised be God, for he hath showed me wonderful goodness in a strong city.* Arnd is short and good: "the strong city is God himself, and his powerful and gracious protection, in which we are even more secure than in a strong city," Psalm xlvi. The Psalmist had already prayed (ver. 2) that God would be to him a stronghold and a high mountain, and he now sees this prayer fulfilled. Verse 22d corresponds to verse 1, in the same way as the verse before us corresponds to verse 2,—the last of the second decade to the first of the first.

There follows in ver. 22 the *conclusion*, which shortly recapitulates the whole. *And I said in my rapid flight, "I am torn away from thine eyes," but thou heardest the voice of my prayer when I cried to thee.* חפז always means *to hasten from fear:* compare especially 1 Sam. xxii. 26. Here it is used *figuratively:* the dejected man who looks upon his case as lost, appears like one in a trembling haste. The word shows us how much of anxiety and despondency lies concealed under the apparently strong and unwavering faith which seemed to meet us at the beginning of the Psalm. גזר, with which נגרז evidently agrees in signification, (compare Psalm lxxxviii. 8), always signifies *to be cut off, to be rooted out,* and never *to be shut out.* נגרזתי indicates *the irremediable destruction, the death,*—compare, "they think to take away my life," ver. 13, and נגזר מארץ חיים "he was rooted out of the land of the living," Isaiah liii. 8. There can be no reason drawn from the appended words, "from thine eyes," for giving to נגרז an unusual signification. The man, who is rooted out, who has descended to the kingdom of the dead, is at the same time removed from the eye of God, that is, is no longer the object of the delivering grace of God: compare Isaiah xxxviii. 11, where Hezekiah says, "I said I shall not see the Lord in the land of the living." The *voice of supplication* is not "the supplicating voice;" but the תחנונים are the proper objects of *answer*, and the "voice" is added only because it is the object of the *bodily hearing*—the sound, *i. e.* the call of my supplicatory complaint.

After the Psalmist had ended matters with God, he turns round to *his brethren in the faith*, for the purpose of setting before them the lesson to be drawn from the great drama which had been acted before their eyes.

Ver. 23. *Love ye the Lord all ye his saints, the Lord preserveth faithfulness, and plentifully rewardeth him who acteth with haughtiness.* The exhortation to love the Lord is followed by the basis on which it is made to rest, "*for* the Lord preserveth faithfulness." After "the Lord preserveth faithfulness," we must supply, "towards his saints:" and this supplied clause finds its opposite in "acteth with haughtiness." There is no reason for translating, "the Lord preserveth the faithful,"—נצר does occur in the sense of "to hold," "to observe," as for example, Exodus xxxiv. 7, and Isaiah xxvi. 3,—and, on the other side, there is no clear proof of אמונים being used as an adjective. Compare at Psalm xii. 1. על יתר is properly "superabundantly," "plentifully."

Ver. 24. *Be ye strong, and may he strengthen the heart of all of you who trust in the Lord.*

PSALM XXXII.

David celebrates in this Psalm the happiness of a sinner who has obtained mercy from God, the preciousness of the forgiveness of sins, and the blessing of purity and uprightness before God which alone lead to the obtaining of forgiveness. In the *introduction*, ver. 1 and 2, he indicates his subject in general, by pronouncing the man to be blessed who has obtained the forgiveness of sin, and has not excluded himself from it by inward impurity. In the *main body* of the Psalm, he depicts first, (ver. 3 and 4,) the *misery* which he endured, so long as the sin of which he was conscious stood like a partition wall between him and God, and he, still under the dominion of *sin*, had neither repented before God, nor asked from him the grace of forgiveness. Then he tells us that *forgiveness* immediately followed upon *confession*, ver. 5. In ver. 6 and 7, he represents, in opposition to ver. 3 and 4, the blessed consequences of forgiveness obtained through uprightness: he is now concealed from those judgments which hang over sinners, he has God again for his

friend, and in him he has protection against every danger, and the joyful assurance of deliverance. In ver. 8 and 9, he grounds a *lesson* upon this *history:* the righteous man, who has fallen, may seek the forgiveness of sin through that return to God, which is free to all his people. In the *conclusion*, ver. 10 and 11, the Psalmist, proceeding from what is particular to what is general, pronounces the man to be happy who has placed his confidence in God: all things, even his sins, must in the end work together for good, while the ungodly is visited with severe punishment.

The formal arrangement of this Psalm is very obvious. The whole is broken up into strophes of two verses, with the exception that the fifth verse, which may be considered as the heart of the Psalm, representing, as it does, the inseparable connection between free confession and forgiveness, makes a strophe by itself, and thus stands apart from the general train of the Psalm—a circumstance which is evidently pointed out by its disproportionate *length.* The *introduction* consists of two verses, and there is a corresponding *conclusion* of an equal number. The *Main body* is complete in seven. The three chief divisions in the historical part are indicated by the thrice repeated *selah.*

Most commentators suppose that David composed this Psalm when he obtained forgiveness from God after his adultery with Bathsheba, and the death of Uriah, to which that sin led. The correctness of this view can scarcely be called in question. That the case represented in ver. 3 is no *fiction*, but *a reality*, is clear as day. The Psalmist speaks in language far too definite of himself and of a particular case, to allow us to regard the matter as a fiction. Now, if the matter be a reality, no other circumstances can be referred to, except those above mentioned. All the different features agree exactly. Here, as there, it is none of the common *sins of infirmity* that are spoken of, but a *dreadful transgression*, yea, an assemblage of dreadful transgressions: compare the expression in the 5th verse, "I will confess *my transgression* to the Lord," in reference to which the transgression of David with Bathsheba, and the accompanying circumstances are said to hold a peculiar place in the history of David, 1 Kings xv. 5. Here, as there, we have a long continuance of impenitence: according to ver. 3, "the bones of the Psalmist waxed old *continually*," according to ver. 4, "the

hand of the Lord was heavy upon him *day* and *night*;" and, according to the history, there elapsed nearly a whole year between the sin of David and the repentance. Here, as there, we have a sudden *transition:* confession of sin at once breaking out, and forgiveness immediately following. Compare ver. 5, 'I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou didst take away the guilt of my sin," with 2 Samuel xii. 13, "And David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord, and Nathan said to David, the Lord forgiveth thy sin, thou shalt not die."—The reasons which have been adduced, to show that the historical account given in Samuel, is not wholly in accordance with the Psalm, are easily set aside. David, it is said, according to that account, did not confess his sin, but had it brought before him by Nathan. But, even according to Samuel, David *did confess* his sin, and the circumstance that his confession was called forth by Nathan's address, did not detract from its character as a voluntary act. David must have arrived, within his own mind, even at the very threshold of repentance; otherwise the address of Nathan would not have produced the effect which it did. Nathan did not originate the confession, he only developed it. In what other way can we explain the fact, that Nathan postponed the discharge of his duty towards the king for such a length of time after the sin was committed, except by assuming, that he waited, according to the direction of God, for the crisis in David's mind. Inasmuch, therefore, as the address of Nathan occupied only a subordinate place, and was not the ground, but merely the occasion of David's confession, David might very well pass it over in silence in this Psalm, in the same way in which he does in the 51st Psalm, which refers to the same circumstance. Again, a great deal of stress is laid upon the circumstance, that the writer of this Psalm is joyful at having obtained deliverance from the punishment of his sin with which he had already been visited, (ver. 6 and 7), whereas in 2 Samuel xii., David obtained forgiveness previous to the infliction of the punishment. But the punishment, in deliverance from which the Psalmist rejoices, is not one with which he had been already visited, but one which he dreaded, with which he was threatened, one, present indeed, in the view of conscience, which already saw the angel with the flaming sword approaching, but in reality yet future; in ver. 6, it is said that

"the floods shall not *reach* to the godly who prays at the right time to God for forgiveness of sin," but not that "they shall *turn* away from him," and in ver. 7, the preceding clause, "thou preservest me from *trouble*," leads us to consider the "songs of deliverance," as songs called forth by deliverance from *threatened* danger. Now, David had been visited with anxiety in regard to future punishment, after his adultery with Bathsheba. The expression of Nathan, 2 Samuel xii. 10, "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house, because thou hast despised me and taken the wife of Uriah," would not have produced such a dreadful impression on his mind, had not his conscience, before this, distinctly and repeatedly made the same announcement.

It has been frequently maintained that this Psalm stands in opposition to the general sense of the Old Testament. "It teaches inward reconciliation with God through faith, whereas according to the theocratic view and practice, reconciliation is outward, and obtained by sacrifice." But there cannot be produced out of the whole Old Testament one single passage in which the doctrine that sacrifices of themselves, and apart from the state of mind of the offerers, are well-pleasing to God, is spoken of, except for the purpose of vigorously opposing it. The law of Moses disowns this doctrine with complete decision. When, for example, in Jer. xxvi. 31, it is said in reference to the ungodly, "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours," and when in Genesis iv. 4, 5, we find that along with an outward similarity, the offerings of Cain and Abel met with such different receptions from God, and that this difference is represented as being based on something *personal* to the individuals, it is all but expressly asserted, that sacrifices are regarded only as expressive of the mind within. Moreover, how could any such importance be attached to sacrifices considered as such, when the value of all that man does is so repeatedly and so decidedly represented as dependant on his love to God? Compare Beitr. P. iii. p. 611. Now, just as *sacrifices* do not exclude *faith*, but faith is rather the *soul* of sacrifices, so faith does not exclude sacrifices. It is not a matter of any consequence, that David should have made no reference to them in this Psalm, inasmuch as, although generally available in the case before us, (compare on this Psalm li.) they occupy in every instance a very subordinate place.

According to Amyraldus and others, the Psalm is irreconcileably at variance with Psalm i. "For whoever receives prospe-

rity as the reward of his virtue and holiness, stands in no need of forgiveness of sin; and, on the other hand, whoever needs forgiveness of sin, cannot hope for prosperity as the reward of his good works." But, that the variance is altogether in appearance, is obvious from the fact, that in many Psalms, (as for example, Psalm xix.), both positions are maintained, that salvation is the reward of righteousness, (comp. on Psalm xix. 12), and that salvation is the consequence of forgiveness of sin, and that in many instances both occur in immediate connection with each other. As even the righteousness of the man, who is in a state of grace, (and it is only with such a man that both these Psalms have to do), is in every instance a righteousness in the *aim*, so the reward which is promised to diligence in good works, and to which Psalm i. refers, can be obtained only when forgiveness of manifold transgressions has been sought and obtained from the compassion of God.

The Psalm is termed in the title, a Maskil of David. The most obvious explanation of this term which occurs in the titles of thirteen Psalms, is that of *Instruction,—a Didactic Poem:* compare השׂכיל in the sense of "to make, to understand," in Prov. xvi. 23; xxi. 11. A very decisive circumstance in favour of this interpretation, is the occurrence of אשׂכילך in ver. 8, where we have given us what is as good as an explanation of the title, and this circumstance is to be regarded as all the more important, from the fact, that the word is made use of in the *very first* Psalm which bears the title. Further, it may be urged in favour of this interpretation, that the Psalm bears so entirely a didactic aspect, that the author seems as if he had resolved beforehand to lose sight of all regard to every thing of an individual character, for the purpose of writing on behalf of the whole church. To this it may be added, that in Psalm liii. this interpretation is clearly demanded by the reference to the title contained in ver. 2. That poem was designed to *bring to reason* the *unreasonable* men there spoken of. Compare page 211. The only objection against this interpretation, that all the Psalms so designated do not bear a didactic character, is not to be set aside by the remark of Stier, that it is of the nature of such names that they are on these occasions used in a vague manner. It may rather be observed, that every expression of holy feeling is subservient to the purpose of instruction in righteousness, that in the Psalms, which were call-

ed forth by *individual* occasions, the Psalmist expresses his feelings on behalf of the whole church, and that in the very many Psalms, in which the *Righteous man* is the speaker, the hortatory character is obvious to all except the most superficial readers. The designation is indeed applicable in an especial manner to *all* the Psalms, inasmuch as they all have been reckoned worthy to be made use of in the services of the sanctuary, and to be admitted as part of the sacred Scriptures: compare 2 Tim. iii. 16, where as much is said of the whole Scriptures of the Old Testament. And for this very reason, it may have been considered unnecessary so to designate those Psalms which were pointed out by their very form as didactic Psalms, and to apply the designation especially for those in which this character was least apparent. The didactic Psalms, properly so called, did not need this N.B.—The common interpretations of משכיל, have been refuted in the Christology, I. 1, p. 113. The exposition there adopted—"a pious poem," cannot be maintained against the positive grounds on which the exposition, "Instruction," rests.—The relation of משכיל to אשכילך in ver. 8, leaves little room for doubt as to David's having composed the title, and affords a pretty strong presumption in favour of the titles generally.

Ver. 1. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* Ver. 2. *Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* The reasons why the Psalmist pronounces the man to be blessed who has obtained forgiveness of sin, are apparent in the following verses: compare Rom. iv. 6. He, whose sins have not been forgiven, has the hand of God lying heavy upon him, and is in frightful expectation of that judgment with which in God's own time he will infallibly be visited. In this declaration of blessedness belonging to the man whose sin has been forgiven, there lies an indirect exhortation not to shut ourselves out from this benefit by our own fault. Compare 1 John i. 8, 9. The connection with the concluding paragraph of the Psalm is apparent, where the consequences which inevitably result from this exclusion are expressly named. The words are directed against the error of those who seek to come to terms with their sin, by expiating it themselves, by concealing, or by palliating it. The Berleb. Bible: "As children imagine that they are not seen, when they put their hands upon their eyes, and cover them so

that they themselves see no one, in like manner, men act with equal folly, in supposing that their sins and crimes, when concealed from themselves, are also concealed from the all-seeing eye of God." The three expressions applied to sin, (compare on פֶּשַׁע at Psalm xix. 14,) are borrowed from the fundamental passage on the forgiveness of sin, Ex. xxxiv. 7, "Keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." The form נְשׂוּי instead of נְשׂוּא, is adopted on account of its similarity in form to כְּסוּי. The חשׁב with the ל occurs in 2 Sam. xix. 19, where Shimei addresses David, apparently in allusion to common theological expressions, and particularly, perhaps, to this very Psalm: "Let not my lord impute iniquity to me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely." The king, who knew so well how to extol the forgiving grace of God, would not turn away the man who had fled to *his* forgiving grace. Compare Matt. xviii. 23.—The succeeding context contains an explanation, as to where it is that the *guile* lies. As the results of it, we find mention made of "keeping silence," of "not making known," of "hiding iniquity," and of "not confessing transgressions." This guile, this want of inward truth, which denies, extenuates, excuses, or seeks for apologies, is inconsistent with the blessedness of forgiveness here praised by David. Forgiveness is never bestowed except where sin is acknowledged and confessed. The roots of this guile, which makes its appearance immediately after a fall into sin, are *pride*, *want of confidence in God*, and *love of sin*. Many are hereby prevented altogether from confessing sin: they fall into a state of Pelagian self-righteousness in their misery, and consider themselves as altogether excellent. Others, again, exhibit the *first beginnings* of true confession of sin, but they do not reach the proper point, because *this guile* will not allow them to acknowledge the whole magnitude of their guilt. There are many also, even of those who have really come to a state of grace, who embitter, by means of this guile, the blessing of forgiveness, which they have obtained in the exercise of integrity of mind. And nothing but strong views of sin, and of their own condemnation before God, together with the conviction that it is altogether by grace that they stand, can set them free from this temptation. The feelings of nature struggle hard against that thorough humiliation of soul which implies real conviction and unreserved acknowledgment of sin. Hence it is necessary

for them to lay to heart the expressions of this verse, dictated for their use by David, as the result of a peculiarly painful experience of the misery which flows from sin unforgiven because of the prevalence of guile. In the case of David, although his transgressions were so enormous, guile would easily find, as it generally does, when the heart is so inclined, many subterfuges behind which to conceal itself. The first sin was not one which he sought out; it was one the temptation to which presented itself before him: and a monarch, especially an eastern one, in a case of this kind, would feel quite disposed to adopt a standard of his own. And after the first sin was committed, it is easy to see how he might look upon after circumstances rather as the result of necessity than as involving heinous guilt.

In the *main body* of the Psalm the Psalmist unfolds the *grounds* which led him to pronounce the man to be blessed whose sin had been forgiven, and in whose spirit there was no guile. These grounds, as manifested in his own experience, were the sufferings which he had endured when, through guile, he continued shut out from the forgiveness of sin, and the peace which he enjoyed when he had unreservedly acknowledged his guilt. Upon this he founds an exhortation addressed to the fallen, to follow him in the way of integrity and repentance.

Ver. 3. *For I kept silence, when my bones wasted away through my howling continually.* The particle כִּי, which is rendered by some expositors "when," and by others "because," is, as the particle of *reasoning*, altogether in the right place: it may be considered as referring, either merely to the verse before us—the suffering induced by the silence, the guile, with which the holding fast of sin is inseparably connected, lays the basis of the declaration of blessedness belonging to the man whose sin has been forgiven because in his spirit there is no guile—or to the whole following exposition in reference to the two introductory verses. The object of the silence is intimated in what follows: I was silent in regard to my *sin*. "I made known to thee my sin," in ver. 5, is the opposite clause. The expression, "I was silent," does not imply that David altogether refrained from prayer, but intimates that he had never once brought forward in prayer the matter in question. Even although he had spoken of it to God as a small weakness, and asked forgiveness for it as such, he might still be said to have *kept silence*. In all probability, however, he carefully avoided the mention of it in

prayer altogether: his conscience must have spoken with too loud a voice to permit him to attempt even to extenuate such a matter either before himself or before God. But in very proportion to the depth of his silence, would be the loudness of his sighs and his groans. He who resists the confession of his sin, and gives way to guile, lays himself open to the torments of conscience, which it is beyond the reach of human power to calm. כָּלָה is "to grow old," "to pine away." The bones are named as the seat of strength in the human frame. When they become as it were corroded, the whole body is weak and powerless. Jo. Arnd: "Melancholy arising from sin consumes away the body, reduces it to a wretched condition, and gives rise to a secret weeping at heart, so that there is constantly a *rugitus*, a howling. This inward pain and melancholy continues to increase, so that even the bones, says David, waste away, when a man is determined to hide his sins from God, and will not confess them from the bottom of his heart, with supplication and humble prayer. As soon, however, as a man turns with his whole heart to God, confesses to him his sins, complains of his melancholy and sorrow, and humbly deprecates the offence which he has given him, then the pain diminishes, and conscience becomes tranquil and happy. For, previous to humble supplication, there is always fear and anxiety at heart, so that the man takes God for his enemy; as we see Adam did, who was afraid of God, and hid himself among the trees, where he was in perpetual fear, regarding God as his enemy. Wherefore, the best plan to obtain a quiet conscience is to mourn over sin before God, and humbly to deprecate his wrath."

Ver. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my heart was changed through the heat of summer. Selah.* The "for" gives the reason why the bones of the Psalmist were wasted perpetually. Who would not howl, when the *hand of God* (Job xiii. 21) *is laid* upon him! We learn from verses 6 and 7, in what the Divine inflictions consisted: for there we find David rejoicing that in consequence of his having received the forgiveness of his sins, he had obtained security against the judgments of God, protection against trouble, and the full assurance of deliverance. Conscience, according to Luther's expression, pictures the wrath of God standing as with a club over us. He thought upon the terrible threatenings of Divine judgments against sinners as they occur in the law, for example in

Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. He looked back upon the fate of Saul and of his family as prophetic of his own.—לשד is generally translated by "animal spirits." This translation is derived from the Arabic, where the verb signifies "to suckle." But in the only other passage where the word occurs, (Num. xi. 8), this view is altogether unsuitable. There לשד signifies a "compact mass." According to that passage, and Ps. cii. 4, "my heart is smitten and withered like grass," it appears that it ought to be considered as a poetical expression for "the heart." The heart was changed; instead of being a strong beating, lively heart, it had become faint and dead. The "heat of summer," is a poetical expression for the torments of conscience, anxiety in regard to threatened judgments—identical with "the hand of God" in the preceding clause. This is to the heart what the heat of summer is to the plants: compare Ps. cii. 4.

Ver. 5. *I made known to thee my sin, and mine iniquity I did not cover: I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* What is expressed here as the result of personal experience is announced in Prov. xxviii. 13, as a general truth: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy." The Psalmist designedly repeats the three terms applied to sin in verses 1 and 2, for the purpose of announcing that his experience had amply confirmed the general truth there expressed. The expression, "I *make* known my sin to thee," on which most expositors have bestowed a great deal of attention, is to be explained by the simple consideration, that the strength of the Psalmist's feelings made him speak of what was past as actually present; compare the corresponding term תכבד (ver. 4), properly "*is* heavy." It is obvious that the Psalmist is not speaking of "a making known" by the mouth, but "of an inward confession, such as is accompanied with painful repentance and sorrow, with begging of pardon for sin and for the offence rendered to the Divine majesty. Mary Magdalene did not utter one word, she wept and spoke with the heart." Arnd. The confession which is here spoken of, as the subjective condition of forgiveness, is distinguished from the confession of a Cain and of a Judas, by its being the fruit of that *faith* which opens the heart and the mouth. The Psalmist confesses his sins freely to God, because he has the conviction that God both can and will help him, while the forced confession of the

ungodly is bound up with despair and murmuring against God. It must have been infinitely more difficult, under the Old Testament dispensation, to rise to this confidence, than it now is, under the New, when we behold the compassion of God in Christ, and are taught to regard Christ's merits as the cause of our justification. If we hesitate to take refuge in the forgiving grace of God, we shall be much more guilty than David was.—The expression, "I covered not," stands in marked contrast to the experience of hypocrites, in which the Psalmist hitherto had participated. They endeavour, as far as they possibly can, to conceal and to gloss over their sins. The words also stand in reference to the expression "whose sin is covered," in ver. 1. He only has his sins covered, who does not himself cover them. Forgiveness of sin is in exact proportion to confession of sin. ידה in Hiph., with the accusative, is "to confess;" with the על "to lay confession over."

Ver. 6. *For this reason let every pious man pray to thee at the time when thou mayest be found, truly when great waterfloods come, they shall not reach him.* Already, even in this verse, the Psalmist makes an attempt to pass from the representation of his own personal experience, to the teaching and exhortation founded upon it. Still, even in this *attempt*, there remains, (and indeed this strophe sets forth), a representation of personal experience. This is clear from the contents of the 7th verse, and from the circumstance, that for the first time in the 8th verse, the Psalmist makes known his resolution in accordance with the title משכיל, to ground his instruction upon the historical details. It is as if he had said: "Because in my case forgiveness immediately followed confession, therefore may every pious man pray for the same at the right time. For my experience has rendered it obvious that this is the sure means of avoiding Divine judgments: I have obtained, as the sequel of forgiveness, a joyful assurance of deliverance, and a sure refuge in God." The main idea of the strophe is contained in ver. 7, which cannot be entered into by those who look upon the whole strophe as having an *applicatory* character. על זאת is "therefore," "for this reason,"—"on account of the real connection, manifested in my case, between confession and forgiveness,"—the effect resting upon the cause—the consequence upon its basis:—it corresponds to the ordinary expression על כן. After the example of the Vulgate *(pro hac)* most expositors give

"for this thing," viz. "for the forgiveness of sin." But התפלל never occurs with על of the object. The object of the prayer, viz. the forgivenesss of sin, is not specified, because the connection renders it apparent. The "time of finding," is "so long as thou mayest be found:" compare Is. lv. 6, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." The object of the finding—God—is also to be gathered from the context. The fundamental passage, Deut. iv. 29, directs us here: "and ye seek from thence the Lord thy God, and thou findest." The "finding," there, as here, stands without any object. The "seek," there, corresponds to the "pray," here. Compare also the passage, Jeremiah xxix. 12—14, which refers to the one in Deuteronomy. The "finding of the Lord," is the opposite of "the seeking," and corresponds to the "being found," in ver. 14. The expositions, "at the time of obtaining," and "at the time of surprisal, *i. e.* when misery comes upon men," are to be rejected. The last is altogether contrary to the sense, for the exhortation of the Psalmist implies, that men may be reconciled to God *before* misery comes. —The time when God, according to the sure promise in the fundamental passage, may be found, is the time previous to the *infliction* of that punishment which invariably follows sin unless averted by forgiveness. The expression, "at the time of finding," corresponds exactly to "ere the decree is executed," "ere the day of the wrath of the Lord comes upon you." "The time of finding," is the space between the sin and the punishment, the day of grace which is designed to lead the sinner to repentance. רק stands here in its usual sense of "only." The simplest view to take of the word, and one in entire accordance with its position, is to consider it as implying the assurance that this, and *only* this, will be the consequence: in reality, it is equivalent to "assuredly." That the ל in לשטף is to be regarded as a note of time *(at the floods of many waters*, comp. Psalm xxix. 10), is evident from the reference, which it is impossible not to notice, to the preceding לעת:—"whoever at the time of finding, during the season of grace, flies to God for forgiveness, shall at the time of *judgment* be exempted from it. The expression, *water-flood*, indicates some great Divine judgment spreading over everything. Perhaps the Psalmist refers to the deluge, at which, though it overspread the whole earth, the pious Noah was delivered as one who had obtained the forgiveness of sin. This reference is the more obvious, from the

circumstance, that there is also a reference in Psalm xxix. 10, to the deluge.

Ver. 7. *Thou art my hiding place, thou preservest me from trouble, thou surroundest me with songs of deliverance.* "For" might have stood at the beginning of the verse. For it confirms, by the experience of the Psalmist, the assertion contained in the preceding verse, that whoever has obtained from the Lord forgiveness of sin, is at the same time delivered from danger and judgment. Many expositors regard this verse, very inaptly, as containing the prayer to be addressed by the pious man to God. The object of this prayer can be nothing else than forgiveness of sin. It is, however, only of the blessed consequences of forgiveness, and not at all of forgiveness itself, that this verse speaks. Between צר and תצרני, and also between תצרני and רני there is an obvious alliteration. The plural form רני occurs nowhere else. According to rule, the Psalmist ought to have written רן; and this form also occurs really as the infinitive of רנן in Job xxxviii. 7: compare the infinitives of פלט and הבין used as nouns. Some, and among others, Hitzig, are inclined to cancel רני. Against this, however, we have the alliteration, the reference to a fulness and a crowd in "thou surroundest me," the הרנינו in ver. 11, and the baldness of פלט, if it stands by itself. The words point to a whole herd of dangers and troubles, by which the Psalmist formerly, when he had God for his enemy, saw himself in spirit surrounded. He now sees around him a joyful, instead of a sorrowful ring.

The Psalmist had hitherto spoken to God: now having laid the foundation for his instruction in historical details, he turns to his *brethren*. The circumstance, that it is here, for the first time, that such a transition occurs, is sufficient to show, that it is here for the first time that we enter the domain of *application*. The Psalmist informs us *first*, of his determination to give good advice to his brethren, ver. 8, and *then*, in ver. 9, he gives them that advice.

Ver. 8. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee the way which thou shouldest go, I will counsel thee with my eyes.* It is the pious man, laden with the guilt of sin, that is here addressed. The singular is used for the purpose of giving more impressiveness to the exhortation. Language is most impressive, when it is made use of in the presence only of four eyes. In ver. 9, the plu-

ral is made use of instead of the singular: and at the end of the Psalm the singular again occurs, for the purpose of showing that the same party is addressed. According to several expositors, it is God that speaks in this verse, expressing approval of the trust of David the returning sinner, and promising him further help. But against this idea, which is not only without foundation, but which entirely destroys the connection and train of thought, there may be urged, in addition to many other reasons, the manifest reference which the clause, "I will instruct thee," bears, on the one hand, to the title, in which David announces his purpose to deliver *instruction*, and, on the other, to the "*without understanding*," or ver. 9:—the instruction given ought to remove the want of *understanding*. Then, there is the parallel passage, Psalm li. 15, where David promises to the Lord, that he will teach sinners *his ways*, when he shall have obtained forgiveness. On the words, "the way which thou shalt go," Jo. Arnd remarks, "this way means repentance and the forgiveness of sins." עֵינִי, properly, "according to my eye," is the accusative, which is often used in this way, when, besides the whole, any particular part is added, which is more especially brought into action: compare on Psalm iii. 4. The tender care of the counsellor is expressed by the construction of יעץ with עַל—properly, "to take counsel over any one." The eye, besides, is the organ by which tender care is expressed. Hence tender forbearance is expressed by "mine eye pities:" compare Gen. xliv. 21, where Joseph says, "bring him down and I will set mine eyes upon him," Jeremiah xxiv. 6. Many expositors give, "I will counsel, mine eye shall be upon thee." But, in this way, words inseparably connected are torn asunder: after *counsel*, the person who receives the counsel ought to be named. —After the end of this verse, we should read with marks of quotation. For the counsel of tender and thoughtful love follows in the 9th verse.

Ver. 9. *Be not like the horses and the mules without understanding whose ornaments are bridle and bit, for restraint, because they do not come near thee.* David compares impenitent sinners to the irrational beasts, which must be kept under by strong instruments of restraint. By this comparison he directs attention to the *degradation* inseparable from such obstinacy—(in man, especially in a pious man, and it is with such alone that David has to do, a free, willing, and joyful obedience is becoming; for such a one it is particularly humbling to be compelled)—and

also to the *fruitlessness* of it, since God knows as well how to subdue it, as man knows how to manage the obstinate brutes. The Berleb. Bible: "If we do not consent to serve God *willingly*, we *must* serve him in the long run whether we will or not. He, who runs away from God's willing service, falls into his compulsory service. On this account the wise Stoic prayed, 'lead me, O God, the way which thou hast chosen: and if I *will* not, nothing is better than that I be *compelled*.' Recourse is not had to bit and bridle, unless we will not become wise by gentler means. God employs these for the purpose of delivering us from destroying ourselves. May we then rather follow with good will, than be dragged along by compulsion. . . . . The ungodly will make a cross of every thing that has been sent them by God in punishment of their sins. But that is not worth the name. It is rather the rod of punishment for an ass." Jo. Arnd: "You have received from God a reasonable soul, yea, you hear the friendly pleasing voice of your father and his dear son. But, if you will be as stupid as the horse or the mule, God, in that case, will act well in putting upon your neck a bridle and a bit, for the purpose of compelling and restraining you like a senseless brute. God, for example, put a bridle and bit into Nebuchadnezzar's mouth, and tamed the proud beast. God also put a bridle and bit into Manasseh's mouth: when he lay bound in iron chains he would gladly have bowed the knee before God, if his iron fetters would have permitted him. God brought down the proud Pharaoh by means of contemptible creatures, frogs, lice, and grasshoppers, and put a wonderful bridle into the mouth of the proud horse."—עדי has always the sense of "ornament:" and this is to be retained here, and by no means to be exchanged for the arbitrary one "harness," (on which Gesenius remarks, *frigidius hoc est et otiosum*), nor for "jaw," (Luther's: "into the mouth.") They answer very well as ornaments for their obstinacy, says the Psalmist: men put upon them bridle and bit, and know how to restrain them by these. The ב indicates that in which the ornament consists. The infinitive בלם occupies the place of the noun, and therefore the suffix is unnecessary. David speaks here in part out of his own painful experience: bit and bridle were, if not put upon him, yet threatened to be put upon him: compare ver. 3d and 4th.—The last clause, lit: *not to come near thee*, is abrupt, and implies, "because they do not come near thee, for the purpose of rendering a willing obedience." The "to thee," refers "to the person addressed, who

is exhorted not to render it necessary for God to use the same violence with him which he himself uses with his beast." Stier.

There follows in ver. 10 and 11 the *Conclusion*, in which David, in contrast to the miserable condition of the *wicked*, praises the happy state of the *righteous*, who put their confidence in God, in language called forth by the deliverance which, when he had fallen very deeply, had been vouchsafed to him by God, out of apparently irremediable destruction. The verses lead from the particular to the general; and several expositors have in vain attempted to find in them an exact reference to the case on which the Psalm is grounded.

Ver. 10. *The wicked has many sorrows, but he who trusts in the Lord he encompasseth him with mercy.* We may either translate, "mercy surrounds him," or, "he surrounds him with mercy." In favour of the latter translation we have the seventh verse, where, in like manner, סובב is construed with a double accusative. "He who trusts in the Lord" is the *pious man*. The contrast shows that the language does not refer to a single act, but to an *abiding relation*. Inasmuch as David stood related to God, in general, as one who trusted in him, God visited him with fatherly chastisement, and even this chastisement tended to his good. Jo. Arnd: "The cross of believers is a fatherly rod applied for the best of purposes, for correction and instruction, and it has a joyful termination. But the punishment of the ungodly is a plague and a pain by which their pride and impudence are put to shame."

Ver. 11. *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye upright.* It is very obvious here that the RIGHTEOUS MEN of the Psalms are not absolutely righteous.

PSALM XXXIII.

The design of this Psalm is to fill the little flock of Israel with comfort and courage and joy, in view of the infinitely superior might of the world; its fundamental tone is, "fear not thou worm Jacob, thou little nation, Israel." The weapon which the Psalmist proposes that the church should use against all the assaults and attacks that are made against her on the part of the whole world, is the *Praise of God;* if you know him as he is, you may despise all trouble and all danger, and say in the

language of the 20th verse, (which may be considered as the heart of the Psalm, containing a very clear exposition of its design by the author himself,) "our soul waiteth for the Lord, he is our help and shield."

The Psalm begins (ver. 1 and 2) with an exhortation addressed to the church of God *to praise him.* In laying down a basis for this exhortation, the Psalmist is led to contemplate the glorious attributes of God. This contemplation divides itself into two great parts. First, (ver. 4—11,) the Lord is true and faithful, righteous and gracious, (ver. 4, 5,) and almighty (ver. 6—11.) Second, (ver. 12—19,) it is under his government, and by his infinite influence, that all things on earth are kept in their present condition. Hence the people, whom he chooses for an inheritance, are happy, for, as sure as he is *Lord over all,* all things must work together for their good. Nothing depends upon earthly power; hence the want of it is no reason why the Lord's people should despair: his omnipotent love and his loving omnipotence afford them the full assurance of deliverance. In the conclusion, (ver. 20—22,) the church gives utterance to that full confidence which had been called forth, by this contemplation of the glory of God, and prays, that she may receive according to her faith.

The *Introduction* and the *Conclusion,* each of three verses, correspond to one another, and, in like manner, there are two halves of the *main body,* each of the same length, namely, eight verses. The number of the verses of the whole Psalm corresponds to that of the letters of the alphabet. The main division occurs exactly in the middle.

The Psalm, along with the one before it, forms one pair. The chief reason for adopting this view is, that the Psalm *begins* in the same strain as that with which the preceding one *concludes,* namely, an exhortation to rejoice in the Lord: there, *be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart,* here *rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright.* It is impossible to explain this circumstance by the supposition that the collector of the Psalms placed the two together on account of the accidental resemblance between the concluding verse of the one, and the opening verse of the other. For the transition from the particular to the general in Psalm xxxii. takes place in such a striking and sudden manner, as to lead to the idea that it was

intended to prepare the way for passing on to a Psalm of a general character. Another reason is, the want of a title in our Psalm, though standing in the middle of an assemblage which are all designated Psalms of David. This appearance met us in Psalm x., where we found strong reasons for regarding it and Psalm ix. as forming one pair. A *third reason* is to be found in the relation which the *numbers of the verses* of both Psalms bear to each other. In the 33d Psalm the number of the verses corresponds to the number of the letters of the alphabet, a circumstance which we have the less reason for considering as accidental, as the following Psalm is truly an alphabetical one. And in the 32d Psalm the number is equal to one half of the letters of the alphabet. It is at the same time to be observed that even in the 33d Psalm, the main body is divided into two equal parts, and that the one signature of completion, namely, the twenty-two, is as frequently divided into two elevens, as the other, viz. the ten, is divided into two fives. This relation of the verses would therefore lead us to regard the thirty-second Psalm as *introductory* to the thirty-third.

From these remarks, the view we have taken of the relation of the two Psalms to each other, may be considered as established. David, inwardly and deeply moved by the proof of the glory of God, which he had obtained in the forgiveness of his dreadful offence, begins with praising it, and this its outward manifestation. But his heart is so full that he cannot be confined to this, but must take a wider range. He must unfold to Israel all that he has *generally* in God, especially God's protection and help against a hostile world.

Amyraldus has very correctly characterized the style of the Psalm. "The style is pleasing, flowing, measured, without any poetical digressions, or figures, at least of such a kind as to occasion any difficulty." These properties are consistent with the fact that the Psalm has no individual reference whatever, and that both in its introduction and contents it is in the fullest sense a Psalm for the public worship of God.

Ver. *Rejoice ye righteous in the Lord, praise is comely for the upright.* Ver. 2. *Praise the Lord with harp, sing unto him with the Psalter of ten strings.* Ver. 3. *Sing unto him a new song, play skilfully with shouts of joy.* The "righteous" and the "upright" are the Israelites: compare "righteous," used of the people as such in Num. xxiii. 10, and verse 12 of this

Psalm, as also verse 10 and 11, ver. 16 and 17, from which it is evident that the Psalm has a national character. But although it is undoubtedly Israel that is referred to as the righteous and the upright, it is at the same time obvious, that the address is directed towards the true Israelites only, to the exclusion of those who are Israelites *in appearance*—the souls who are rooted out from their people. Compare at Psalm xv.; xxxiv. The reason why the righteous and the upright should praise the Lord, is contained in the conclusion of the preceding Psalm,—"he encompasseth them with mercy,"—and in the 18th verse, where "the eye of the Lord," it is said, "are upon them that fear him." To the unrighteous the glory of God is not the object of joy and praise, but of terror and aversion: the highest wish of their hearts is, that he may not be true, righteous, full of mercy towards his own people, or almighty. To rejoice *in the Lord*, is not altogether to rejoice over the Lord, but to rejoice in finding the inclination of the heart towards God, who gives so many causes for such a joy. Compare on יָשָׁר, *upright*, at Psalm xxv. 8. The word denotes a condition, which is conformable to the rule and the idea, as these are represented in reference to the members of the church in the law of God. נָאוָה is the feminine of נָאֶה, *beautiful, becoming*. As it is comely for God to help, so it is comely for the righteous to praise.—The עָשׂוֹר belongs here, not as in Psalm xcii. 3, to נֵבֶל. The two words stand either in the stat. construct. *the lute of ten*, or they stand unconnected, *the lute ten, the ten-lute*. The *ten-stringed lute* would assuredly not have been mentioned specially by the Psalmist, had the number of the strings not been full of *significance* to him. In all probability, he does not impart this significance, but the instrument had with reference to it been strung with ten strings. The exhortation to join musical instruments with the voice in the worship of God, is grounded on the infinite glory of God, which cannot be sufficiently praised by the voice alone.—A *new* song, (compare Ps. xi. 3; xcvi. 1; xcviii. 1; Rev. v. 9), is a song which springs up new from the heart. The glory of God is new every morning: we know it not only by the hearing of the ear and from the history of ancient times, and therefore we ought to do more than merely repeat the old song. It is a melancholy proof of the decline of the church, when the exhortation to sing a new song is no longer attended to: in such a case, there is need of the greatest care to prevent

the old ones from falling into oblivion. 1 Sam. xvi. 17, agrees remarkably with the expression, "do good to play," *i. e.* "play beautifully." Possibly these words of Saul made a deep impression on David's mind. On בתרועה, from which some without any foundation, would conclude that the Psalm was intended to be sung at the *offering* of sacrifices, compare at Psalm xxvii. 5.

In ver. 4—11, the exhortation to praise God is *grounded* upon his glory. First, in ver. 4, the Psalmist speaks of his *truth* and *faithfulness*. This is placed in the foreground because the books of Moses abound with most glorious *promises* given by God to his church, for the fulfilment of which, the truth and the faithfulness of God are the security.

Ver. 4. *For upright is the word of the Lord, and every work of his is faithfulness.* Luther's translation is rather free, but perfectly correct as to the sense, which is more than can be said of most of the recent translators. "For the word of the Lord is true, and what he has said, that he holds for certain." Stier has very unwarrantably objected to it, that it is "a precipitate effort at specializing." According to the parallelism, "the word of the Lord" is not in general his revelation, or even "his will as made known in the creation and government of the world," but the word which he has spoken in reference to his own people. What the Psalmist here predicates in general of the word of God, (comp. Psalm xix. 9), is, according to the parallelism, to be considered as having special reference to the *word of promise*. This word is said to be "upright," inasmuch as it is in exact accordance with the idea: the speaker has promised what he is both *able* and *willing* to perform. Compare Numbers xxiii. 19: "God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent: hath he said and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good?" Psalm cv. 42.—In the second clause, *the work* of God stands opposed to his *word:* he promises nothing which he does not perform, and he does nothing which he has not promised. באמונה can only be translated, *in faithfulness.* אמונה never signifies *truth.*

After considering the Divine truth and faithfulness, the Psalmist leads the church to contemplate the Divine *righteousness*, which sets limits to unrighteous oppression, and the Divine *love*, which before all men must be manifested in sending deliverance to the Lord's people.

Ver. 5. *He loveth righteousness and justice, the earth is full of the mercy of the Lord.* The consideration of the Divine righteousness can be a source of comfort only to the righteous. For, as such, they must have right upon their side in their contests with their enemies. From the injustice which they suffer on earth they lift their eyes towards heaven, and in this way attain to the confidence that justice will get justice at last. Compare Hab. i. 13, where the church addresses God: "wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?"—On the second clause the Berleb. Bib. remarks: "the earth is a good mother, which nourishes us daily, and gives us all things richly to enjoy." If natural blessings thus manifest the love of God, how gloriously will that love be developed towards his own people!

The faithfulness, the righteousness, and the love of God, on which the Psalmist has hitherto dwelt, and which are exhibited as linked together in the same way in Hos. ii. 21, 22, afford security to his people when in danger, that he is *willing* to help them. But that the consolation be complete, it is necessary to contemplate also the *omnipotence* of God, which secures his *ability*. In reference to the love of God, the Psalmist had looked to the earth as the main seat of its manifestation, and in reference to his omnipotence, he looks as he had done in Ps. viii. xix. xxiv. to the heavens with their stars, and to the sea with its waves. Has not he, who called the heavens into being by his word, and who restrains the fury of the waves, so that they do not overflow the earth, enough of power to protect you, O ye of little faith? If he is for you, who can be against you?

Ver. 6. *Through the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all their hosts by the breath of his mouth.* The host of the heavens is the sun, moon, and stars. That the idea of the angels being referred to is out of the question, becomes evident when we observe the verbal references to Genesis ii. 1, "thus the heavens and the earth were founded, and all their host,—(in the preceding context nothing had been said of the creation of angels, but merely of the creation of the heavenly bodies),—and when we reflect that it is some *tangible* proof of the omnipotence of God that must be here adverted to. Moreover, the heavenly bodies are throughout designated, by way of pre-eminence, the hosts of God: compare at Ps. xxiv. 10. That the רוּחַ,

is not *spirit*, but *breath*, is evident from the words of "his mouth," (compare Is. xi. 4), and from the parallelism with "word:" simple word corresponds to simple breath: both together, they stand in contrast to that exercise of strength, that labour, that use of means and instruments without which feeble man can bring nothing to perfection. Then there are the parallel passages, Job xxvii. 3, "all the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils," xxxiii. 4, "the Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life," Ps. civ. 29, 30, "thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust, thou sendest forth thy *breath*, they are created." On the other hand, however, the exposition which would interpret רוח פיו, without reference to the *Spirit* of God, cannot be a correct one. In their history of the creation, to which the verse before us, as well as verses 7 and 9, generally refer, the creation is described as the work of the SPIRIT of God, and his WORD. First, the *Spirit of God* moved upon the face of the waters, then God *said*. We may also suppose that the Spirit and the power of God are here represented by the *figure* of breath, because that in man is the first sign of life.

Ver. 7. *He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap, he lays down the floods in store-houses.* The Psalmist brings it forward as a proof of the omnipotence of God, that the great fluid mass is brought together like a heap of firm materials, so that it does not spread over the earth, as it did at first. The כנס is not "he gathered," but "he gathers." The wonder of Divine omnipotence here referred to, is of daily occurrence; if God did not keep back the waters they would overflow the earth. The expression "as a heap," stands concisely for "in the way that a heap is gathered." There is assuredly no reference here to the elevated appearance which the sea presents at a distance. To collect the waves, as if they were firm materials, must be a work of omnipotence. Allusion is made here, as also in Psalm lxvii. 13, and in Jos. iii. 13, 16, to Exod. xv. 8, where, in reference to the waters of the Red Sea, it is said in the song of Moses, "the waters stood as an heap, כמו נד." The expression which is there employed to describe the *miraculous* effect produced by the power of God, is here applied to the ordinary course of nature, for the purpose of announcing that this, when deeply considered, bears as distinct evidence to the omnipotence

of God. The old expositors, whom Luther follows, ("he holds the waters in the sea together as in a bag,") have confounded נֵד with נאד.—The second clause is parallel to the first. The תהומות are, as usually, "the floods of the sea." These are deposited by God within the bounds set to the sea, like treasures in a place of security. The point of resemblance is the sure keeping. Several expositors refer here, as at Psalm xxiv. 2, to the *subterraneous* waters. But the reasons which were there adduced against this view, are partly available in the present instance, viz. the obvious reference to Gen. i., where nothing whatever is said of subterraneous waters, the necessity of some tangible proof of Divine omnipotence, &c. Jo. Arnd. completely understood the practical tendency of this verse: "The prophet comes down from heaven, and leads us to the sea, where we may observe the power of God, and the omnipotence of his word. The great sea is shut up by the power of God: how then can he not tame men upon the earth, and put a bridle in their mouth?"

Ver. 8. *Let all the world fear the Lord, let everything that dwells on the earth stand in awe of him.* Ver. 9. *For he spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast.* Inasmuch as the Lord deserves holy fear and reverence, the fear of those men is marked by supreme folly who have him on their side. This becomes manifest, when we contemplate the omnipotence of God, as seen in the creation of the world. Jo. Arnd: "Lo! God has made by his word the great incomprehensible heavens, and upholds and manages them by his word, and shall he not be able to uphold and manage thee, a poor little worm?" There is no reason for translating: "he speaks, and it is done, he commands, and it stands." The use of the pret. and the fut. conv., the reference to Gen. i., in which the ויאמר and וידי alternate, and the comparison in the 6th verse, show that the creation of the world is here spoken of as a thing finished. Ps. cxix. 90, shows that עמד has here its usual sense, "to stand:" compare with verse 91. In reality, "to stand" is "to exist:" what does not exist "lies."

Ver. 10. *The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.* Ver. 11. *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* To the Lord, who has manifested his omnipotence so gloriously in creation, it is an easy matter to bring to nothing the plans of the people; while his own plans

are eternal, and cannot be frustrated, or hindered in their development by any one. How could it be possible, then, that Israel should quail in the presence of the heathen? If their thoughts towards them are for evil, they are only thoughts of *powerlessness;* while, on the other hand, the thoughts of *omnipotence* towards them are thoughts of *peace.*

There follows the *second* half of the *main body,* (ver. 12—19.) The position with which it opens, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord," the Psalmist illustrates by showing that every thing on earth is under the unlimited control of God, (ver. 13—15), who abundantly compensates, by the exercise of his own almighty loving providence, for the injuries which his people may sustain from worldly power, (ver. 16—19).

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he chooses for an inheritance.* The whole is grouped around this position. On the one side, it is the result of an inference from what goes before, and, on the other, it is a proposition to be demonstrated by what follows. The Psalmist refers in the first instance, to Israel, but, at the same time, expresses himself in general terms: Mich: *beatam igitur gentem, quæcunque sit.*

Ver. 13. *The Lord looketh from heaven, he sees all the children of men.* Ver. 14. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all who dwell on the earth.* Ver. 15. *He who fashioneth all their hearts, who marketh all their works.* The looking of the Lord from heaven is not an *idle* act, it is the act of a king or a judge. The 15th verse manifestly shows this. In it the *heart* and the *works* stand in contrast to each other. The heart comes into notice as the workshop of the thoughts: compare ver. 11. The *thoughts* are wholly under God's control, "for he fashioneth the heart:" so are *the works,* "for he observes them." Who then need be afraid on account of the plans and works of men, if he only have God for his friend? God is mentioned here, (as the use of the participle shows), as the Creator of the spirits of men, in reference not only to his original act of creation, but also to his constant creating influence: compare Zech. xii. 1, and the Christology on the passage, P. II. p. 274. God, as the God of the spirits of all flesh, (Num. xvi. 22; xxvii. 16), has all their emotions and thoughts in his hands: compare Prov. xxi. 1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Ver. 16.

To the king his great power affords no help, a warrior is not saved by his great strength. Ver. 17. *The horse is a vain thing for safety, neither does he deliver any by his great strength.* The inference from the position, "that everything on the earth is dependent on the power of God," is, that nothing is dependent on our own power. This inference was in the highest degree *consolatory* to Israel. If the issue of events depended on human strength, Israel might give over for lost. The article in הַסּוּס is generic—the horse is the species: compare Prov. xxi. 31, "the horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord."

Ver. 18. *Behold, the eye of the Lord looks upon those who fear him, who hope in his mercy.* Ver. 19. *To deliver their soul, and to keep them alive in famine.* What cannot be effected by what Israel has not, worldly power, is accomplished by the loving care of his almighty God, in which he rejoices.

There follows, in verse 20—22, the *conclusion*, in which the church gives expression to the faith which has been produced in her by contemplating the glory of God, and prays that she may receive according to this her faith.

Ver. 20. *Our soul waiteth for the Lord, he is our help and shield.* The first clause refers to the words of dying Jacob, in Gen. xlix. 29. Ver. 21. *For our heart rejoices in him, because we trust in his holy name.* The holiness of God is, in this place also, his glory: compare at Ps. xxii. 3. The holy name of God is the product of a long series of the manifestations of his holiness. Whoever trusts in this, and not in his own strength, may rejoice in the Lord, being sure of safety. Ver. 22. *Let thy mercy come upon us, O Lord, as we trust in thee.* When faith, the condition of deliverance, is present, deliverance also must soon appear.

PSALM XXXIV.

The Psalmist renders thanks to the Lord for a deliverance which had been vouchsafed to him, and exhorts the pious to *join* with him in praising God, inasmuch as the Lord *always* manifests himself as equally ready to help his people as he had been on the present occasion, ver. 1—10. "In the second part, he turns to believers, addresses them, and says, that it is

his design to teach them the art of leading a quiet life, and of being protected against enemies. This art consists in the fear of God, in keeping watch on the lips, in doing no evil, and in following after peace: the consequences of these are prayer heard, deliverance out of all danger, the gracious presence of God, communion with him, consolation from him, and the protection of person and life." Jo. Arnd.

Both parts of this alphabetical Psalm contain an equal number of verses—a circumstance which must have been designed, as that number is exactly ten. Verse 11 is as little to be considered as forming part of the second division, as the title of the Psalm is of the first: it has altogether the character of an *introduction*. And verse 22 is evidently the *conclusion* of the whole, summing up its contents, and not more particularly belonging to the second than to the first division. Like the concluding verse of the 25th Psalm, (which resembles still further the Psalm before us, in having no verse allotted to Vau,) it begins with פ, and is still farther removed from the alphabetical series, by the circumstance that that series terminates at ver. 21, which begins with the final letter of the alphabet. The first decade is divided, as it often is, into a three and a seven: ver. 1—3 contain the determination of the Psalmist to praise God, and the exhortation to the pious to take part in that praise: ver. 4—10, the basis of this determination, and exhortation.

The occasion on which the Psalm was written is announced in the title: *Of David, when he concealed his intellect*, i. e. *feigned himself mad*, (Luther, after the example of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, has erroneously given, "his behaviour,") *before Abimelech, whereupon he drove him from his presence, and he went away*. The history is related in 1 Sam. xxi. Being persecuted by Saul, he betook himself to the land of the Philistines. There, he who had on former occasions injured the Philistines so grievously, was recognised and brought into the presence of king Achish. For the purpose of saving his life, which at the time was in very imminent danger, he feigned himself mad; and God blessed this expedient, which, considered by itself, was one of a very doubtful character. The 56th Psalm also refers to the same occasion: there we have the prayer which David addressed to God in his extremity, and here his thanksgivings for deliverance.

It is not, however, to be imagined, that David composed the

Psalm when immediately threatened by danger. In opposition to any such idea, we have the *quiet* tone by which it is pervaded, whereas all the Psalms which were *immediately* called forth by a particular occasion, are characterized by a great deal more of emotion. Besides this, we have the unquestionably predominant effort to draw consolation and instruction for the church from his own personal experience. Finally, we have the alphabetical arrangement, which never occurs in those Psalms which consist of an expression of feelings, immediately called forth by a particular object, but always in those, in which the prevailing design is to edify others. The fact is, that David, when, on some occasion in the subsequent part of his history, his mind became filled with lively emotions arising from the recollection of this wonderful escape, in reference to which he even here says, "I will praise the Lord *at all times*, his praise shall be continually in my lips," made it the ground-work of a treasure of edification for the use of the godly in all ages.

After thus limiting the sense in which to understand the title, it becomes an easy matter to defend it against the attacks of modern criticism. It has been said: 1st, That it cannot be David's, because the Achish of the book of Samuel is exchanged for the Abimelech of the patriarchal times." But this apparent contradiction disappears, when we observe that Abimelech among the Philistines was the title of rank given to all their kings, just as the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh, of Jerusalem, Adonizedeck or Melchisedeck, of the Amalekites, Agag, of Hazor, Jabin, of Temen, Zoba, &c.: compare Beitr. P. III. p. 306, on Bileam, p. 149. In favour of this idea we have three reasons: the first is drawn from Gen. xx. as compared with Gen. xxvi., where Abraham and Isaac have both to do with Abimelech king of the Philistines; the second, from comparing the title of our Psalm with 1 Sam. xxi.; and the third, from the nature of the name itself. Abimelech means "father of a king"; and refers to the *hereditary* descent of the crown among the Philistines, in opposition to the practice of *electing* the sovereign, which obtained in the neighbouring nation of the Edomites. It is altogether natural that the *proper name* should be made use of in the books of Samuel, which bear the character throughout of very exact historical treatises, and that the *generic designation* should occur in the title of a poem, which, to a certain extent, must wear a poetical aspect. 2. "The title," it is maintained,

"is literally copied from 1 Sam. xxi. 14, and therefore cannot have been composed by David, or by any of his contemporaries." But the title agrees with the passage referred to, only in the single expression, "he feigned himself mad." And if it will not be granted that this may have been accidental, it may at once be urged, that the author of the books of Samuel may have borrowed that expression, as it undoubtedly has more of a poetical than a prosaic character. 3. "In verses 4 and 6, a deliverance from *many* dangers," it is said "is referred to, and in ver. 10 the Psalmist speaks of *want* and *privation*." But that one trouble consisted of many parts,—danger threatened David in many forms, and verses 9 and 10 do not refer merely to the particular occasion, but contain a general affirmation which points not only to want of the necessaries of life, but also to want of whatever is good, to want of salvation. 4. "The language and the style," it is maintained, "are different from the real Davidic Psalms." We reply, they differ certainly from those which modern criticism has marked out as exclusively the Psalms of David, but not at all from a great number, which, from their titles, and from internal evidence, were unquestionably composed by him. The difference is perfectly accounted for by the difference as to occasion, tone, and object. We may here advert particularly to the expression, "Come to me, ye sons, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of God." David had hence to do with the poor simple people, and directed his voice to them in love, and spoke so simply that even a child might understand and participate in the blessing which God had given him.

In favour of the originality of the title we have to urge, in addition to the general ground, that there is nothing in the contents of the Psalm to contradict it,—the more general the historical references in the Psalms are, the less likely is the title to be the result of combination,—first, that the strain is altogether characteristic of David, who is so often found endeavouring to turn his own personal experience to the good of the whole community of the righteous, and second, that a title referring to the occasion in question, is what might have been expected, as David appears to have aimed at perpetuating in the titles of the Psalms, the remembrance of all the most remarkable incidents of his life.

First, (ver. 1—3), the Psalmist intimates his intention of

praising God, and exhorts all the godly to join with him in the praise.

Ver. 1. *I will praise the Lord at all times, his praise shall ever be in my mouth.* It is the greatness of the benefit received, that has given rise to the assurance of ever-during praise, in contrast to the common blessings of providence which we are daily experiencing. Ver. 2. *My soul shall make her boast of the Lord, may the meek hear thereof and be glad.* התהלל with ב is "to boast of anything." The meek (Luther, erroneously: *the miserable*) boast of what the Lord has done for the Psalmist, because it is prophetic of *their own deliverance.* Ver. 4. *Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.* As the ל is not the sign of the accusative, and as גדל יהוה never occurs, but only "to make great *the name* of the Lord," Psalm lxix. 30, and as גדל is never "to praise," but always "to make great," it is necessary to supply שמו in the first clause from the second.

In ver. 4—10, we have the *basis* of the determination, and of the exhortation to praise God. Ver. 4. *I sought him, and he answered me, and delivered me out of all my fear.* מגורה is *the object* of the fear, the thing that is feared: comp. Is. lxvi. 4. Ver. 5. *They look at him and are brightened, and their countenance is not ashamed.* The Psalmist considers himself throughout as the representative of the meek. The transition, therefore, is easy from the singular of the preceding verse, to the plural here. He lays down a general position, which is anew illustrated by his own personal experience. Besides, the somewhat undefined description of the subject, is in good keeping with the alphabetical character of the Psalm, which sufficiently explains the want of connection with what goes before and follows. On, "they look to him," Jo. Arnd remarks: "Just as in great extremity, we look around for help to see if any one will deliver us, or, as a child in severe sickness looks mournfully upon its parents, and they are unable to help, so our heart in faith looks mournfully at God." Of the two significations of נהר, "to flow together," and "to brighten," or "to be bright," we cannot, with Luther, take the first, but must prefer the second; compare Is. lx. 5, where "the being bright," is in like manner used of the restoration of serenity to the countenance. The חָפַר is "to be red," viz. with shame at the refusal of the pray-

er, and is the opposite of "the brightening." The אל, the subjective negative, is stronger than לא. The Psalmist is horrified at the idea of being ashamed, as something altogether irregular. Ver. 6. *This miserable man cried, and the Lord heard and helped him out of all his troubles.* The Psalmist in the former verse, made a transition from the particular to the general, as illustrated by his own case; and he now returns to the particular, as confirmative of the truth of the general. שמע is the præterite. Ver. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encamps round about those who fear him, and delivers them.* As the word Jehovah is a name, and one whose signification is fixed, we can only translate, "the angel of the Lord." Considered by itself, "the angel of the Lord" might be taken in a collective sense, as, for example, the horses, in Psalm xxxiii. 17. But yet there occurs no single passage in which מלך יהוה is unquestionably used in that sense, and it appears that there is a general reluctance to adopt it, arising from the recollection of those passages where the term designates the angel of the Lord, κατ. ἐξ., the angel in whom is the name of God, according to the Pentateuch, the angel of his presence, Is. lxiii. 9: compare on the bearing which this has on the divinity of Christ, the Christology, I. 1. The reasons for excluding this sense here, viz. the expression, "encamps round," and the parallel passages, such as Ps. xci. 11, 12; 2 Kings xvi. 17, where angels are spoken of in a similar connection, disappear when narrowly examined. The ANGEL OF THE LORD is represented, in the character of the captain of the Lord's hosts, (Jos. v. 14; 1 Kings xxii. 19,) as attended by armies of inferior ministering angels. And חנה is applied not only to an army but also to the commander, as for example, 2 Sam. xii. 28. Allusion is made to Gen. xxxii. 2, 3, where Jacob, on returning from Mesopotamia, and when afraid of his brother Esau, saw with the eye of his mind a double encampment of angels, at the head of which, from comparing ch. xxviii. 13, and xxxii. 25, we are to suppose the Angel of the Lord to have been, and between which his own encampment would lie. These circumstances, the memory of which was perpetuated by the name Mahanaim given to the place, contained a prophecy embodied in action for the benefit of all who fear the Lord. Ver. 8. *Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* The "taste and see" invite, as it were, to a sumptuous

feast, which has long been ready,—to a rich sight openly exposed to view. The imperatives are in reality not hortatory but promissory: compare, "they have no want," ver. 10. Ver. 9. *Fear the Lord, ye his holy ones, for they have no want who fear him.* The expression depends more on its connection with what follows than upon its condition: "only fear," or "if you only fear." A true and lively fear of God, which proves itself to be such by obedience to his commandments, (compare ver. 13, 14), need never be afraid of losing its reward. On קדושיו as designating the true Israelites, compare at Ps. xvi. 3. Ver. 10. *The lions are reduced to poverty, and are hungry, but they that seek the Lord have want of no one good thing.* That by "the lions" here, as at Ps. lvii. 5, Neh. ii. 12—14, Ez. xxxviii. 13, xix. 2, 3, we are to understand powerful and violent men, is evident from the connection, from the "being reduced to poverty," but especially from the parallel passage, Job iv. 10, 11. Luther, after the manner of the Septuagint, gives, rather indefinitely, "the rich." We have here no special Old Testament truth before us. This is evident from the petition dictated to us by our Lord himself, and from the promise which that petition necessarily implies, regarding our daily bread. It is also evident from Matt. vi. 32, 33. The necessary limitation is found in the 19th verse, which refers to the manifold sufferings by which in this life the righteous are exercised.

There follows the *second* strophe, in which the Psalmist invites all to come to the enjoyment of safety through the sincere fear of God, because such and only such are safe.

Ver. 11. *Come, ye sons, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* In "ye sons," we find one experienced in the ways of God, addressing the young: compare Prov. i. 8; x. 15. On, "I will teach you the fear of the Lord," the Berleb. Bible remarks: "And I will not only show you what it is, but will also after that *give you the strongest reasons which will move you, and incite you to the practice of it.* As the author in what follows, manifestly directs his attention exclusively to the second point, it is obvious that the first is to be kept out of view, although it alone has occupied the attention of most commentators.

Ver. 12. *Who is the man that desires life, that loves days when he may see good?* The Psalmist asks the question, who desires to be happy? To him who desires this,—and where is

the man who does not?—he prescribes, in what follows, the only and unfailing means by which it may be obtained. The "life," according to the explanation given in the second clause, is not mere life, which frequently may be rather called death, but a *happy life*. Days peculiar to the seeing of good are happy days.

Ver. 13. *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak not guile.* Ver. 14. *Turn from evil, and do good, seek peace, and pursue it.* In giving the details of the fear of God, the duties toward our neighbour are, according to David's usual way, dwelt upon with particular care, because there hypocrisy, which is so ready to appropriate to itself promises with which it has nothing to do, finds least scope for its exercise. Verse 13 refers to words, and verse 14 to deeds. It is self-evident that by "peace" here, we are not to understand "virtue," or "goodness." Jo. Arnd: "Hence must every man who desires to have a good life, take care not to cause disagreement. But be thou wary, be silent rather, suffer somewhat, be patient, be gentle, be not easily provoked, be not revengeful. That thou destroy not noble peace, and God, with his blessing, depart from thee." Compare Rom. xii. 18; 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

Ver. 15. *The eyes of the Lord look upon the righteous, and his ears upon their cry.* Ver. 16. *The face of the Lord is against those that do evil, that he may root out their remembrance from the earth.* Properly, it is, "the face of the Lord is *in* the evil doers:" compare on ב used in a hostile sense, Ewald's Kl. Gr. p. 521.

Ver. 17. *They cry, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.* The subject—the righteous—is to be supplied from verse 15. This is by no means harsh, inasmuch as it is very obvious from the announcement in verse 11, that the author has to do, strictly speaking, only with those who fear God, and that what concerns the ungodly, comes into notice, only like the shade which obscures the light. Thus it is with the 15th and 16th verses: "the eye of the Lord, &c. *while* his face, &c."

Ver. 18. *The Lord is near to those who are of a broken heart, and helps them who have a contrite spirit.* The brokenness of heart, and the contrition of spirit, designate the deep, yet soft, and mild sorrow which is to be found in the godly. Compare Isa. lvii. 15 and the introduction to Ps. vi.

Ver. 19. *The righteous man must suffer much, but the Lord helps him out of it all.* The fact that the righteous man must suffer much, shows how imperfect human righteousness is: for where there is *no suffering* there is *no sin*, and where there is *much suffering* there is *much sin*. That the Lord will deliver him out of it all, shows the greatness of the Divine compassion.

Ver. 20. *He keeps all his bones, so that not one of them is broken*, viz. without his will and gracious permission. Compare Matthew x. 30, where we are told that the hairs on the head of he godly are all numbered.

Ver. 21. *Misfortune slays the wicked, and the haters of the righteous become guilty.* The relation in which this verse stands to the 19th, does not permit us to render רעה by "evil," the term for which, in the Psalms, is always רע. There the godly man is delivered out of all misfortune, here misfortune is deadly to the *wicked*. To "become guilty," is to be represented, or to be made to appear guilty.

Ver. 23. *The Lord delivereth the soul of his servant, and none of those who trust in him becomes guilty.* This is the sum of the whole Psalm. The *soul* is mentioned, because, as is obvious from the opposition to ver. 21, and from the personal experience of David, the subject of which the author is treating, is danger to life.

END OF VOL. I.

ERRATA.

Vol. I., page 407, line 30, *for* עדק *read* צדק.
Vol. II., page 275, line 24, *for* lilly, *read* lily.

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